

SPORTS PINK

75p

Home of Hampshire sport July 15 2017

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non league
football news

Pellegrino set for
his first game as
Saints return to
action today ...

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WE
GO AGAIN!



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Swans won't be 'bullied'

Swansea's American owners say they will not be "bullied" into selling Icelandic playmaker Gylfi Sigurdsson.

Sigurdsson dropped out of the Swans' 10-day tour to the US on Thursday morning just hours before the squad's departure across the Atlantic.

The club said Sigurdsson was not in "the right frame of mind to travel" with so much speculation over his future.

It is understood that Swansea have turned down a £40million offer from Everton for the 27-year-old.

Swansea value Sigurdsson at £50m and, in a statement, club owners Steve Kaplan and Jason Levien said: "At this time we have not received an offer from any club which represents a fair valuation of Gylfi given his importance to our club."

"We will not be bullied or forced into a decision until a club meets our valuation of the player, no matter whether they believe they have an agreement with the player."

"Any such agreement would obviously be in contravention of Premier League legislation."

Although there were suggestions his head had been turned by Everton's interest, Sigurdsson captained Swansea in the second half of their friendly defeat at Barnet on Wednesday night.



Gylfi Sigurdsson

Sigurdsson's decision not to go to America the following morning then shocked Swansea officials as they had previously stated that he would be on the plane.

Kaplan and Levien called for Sigurdsson, who joined Swansea from Tottenham for £6.8million in July 2014 and has since scored 30 goals in 112 appearances, to reconsider that decision.

"We are disappointed Gylfi has taken the decision not to join his teammates in America," the statement said.

"We have the ultimate respect for Gylfi as a person and a player and we are optimistic that he will reconsider his decision and join his teammates."

Sigurdsson was instrumental as Swansea preserved their top-flight status and was named the club's player of the year for the second successive season.

He scored nine league goals and had 13 assists, with only Manchester City's Kevin de Bruyne and Tottenham's Christian Eriksen more productive in those combined categories.

Swansea play Philadelphia Union in the first match of their Stateside tour on Saturday.

Their first game of the new league season is at Saints on August 12.

SAINTS

Swiss starters

Peter Howard



SAINTS have booked in five pre-season games this summer, with it all kicking off today against Swiss outfit St Gallen.

Mauricio Pellegrino's will return from their training camp in Austria following the St Gallen match, which takes place in Switzerland this afternoon (3.30pm BST).

The Argentine will spend another week moulding his side at Staplewood before heading to Championship side Brentford next Saturday (3pm BST) and then jetting off to France as they continue to warm up for the new season with another training camp near Evian from Monday, July 24.

That will be concluded with a friendly against French Ligue 1 side Saint-Etienne, before Saints head back to finalise their Premier League preparations with two home games against FC Augsburg and Sevilla.

German side Augsburg will be town on Wednesday, August 2 (7.45pm BST), before the Spanish side come to St Mary's on Saturday, August 5 (3pm).

Here, the Sports Pink, guides you through Saints' pre-season plans:

St Gallen

League: Swiss Super League

Last season: 7th

Kick off: Today, 3.30pm BST

Where: FC Goldach's Sportanlage Kellen ground

St Gallen finished 7th in the ten-team Swiss Super League last season and play their home games at the Kybunpark, a stadium with just 20,000 capacity which was built in 2008.

Saints will not face them at their home ground, however, with the friendly taking place at Swiss lower league side FC Goldach's Sportanlage Kellen ground.

Like Saints, St Gallen have a new manager in charge, with Giorgio Contini taking the helm from Josef Zinnbauer, the former Hamburg reserve team boss who had been at the helm since September 2015.

Contini has just left Lichtenstein outfit FC Vaduz after relegation from the Swiss Super League to take the job at St Gallen.

The 43-year-old used to play for the club as a striker and also worked as a coach there in the past.

Saints and St Gallen have met previous, in pre-season in 2011, when the Swiss side won 1-0, with Kristian Nushi on target.



Mauricio Pellegrino

St Gallen have a number of players to look out for.

Switzerland Under-21 international Alban Ajeti - who top-scored with 11 goals last term - eight-goal Yannis Taffer, midfielder Marco Aratore and Serbian Daniel Aleksić are among their key men.

Another familiar name is Switzerland international Tranquillo

Barnetta, the 32-year-old, who was born in St Gallen, re-joined the club in January from Philadelphia Union.

Brentford

League: Championship

Last season: 10th

Kick off: Saturday, July 22, 3pm BST

Where: Griffin Park

The Bees count a former Saints among their ranks, with captain Harlee Dean having been at St Mary's between 2010 and 2012 without making a first team appearance.

The 25-year-old has since gone on to be a key man for Brentford, winning the supporters' player of the season last term.

The last time Saints went to Griffin Park was during the League One promotion campaign of 2010/11. That day in April 2011, Adam Lallana, David Connolly and Oscar Gobern sealed a 3-0 win for Nigel Adkins' side as they edged towards the Championship.

Dean Smith, the former Walsall, Leyton Orient and Sheffield Wednesday defender, has been manager since November 2015, leading them to 9th and 10th in the second tier in that time.

It may well be Saints' final ever trip to Griffin Park, with the Bees planning a move away from the 12,300 capacity stadium, with the Brentford Community Stadium opening in 2019.

Saint-Etienne

League: French Ligue 1



SAINTS



for Pellegrino



Brentford manager Dean Smith.

club's training camp in Evian, where they will be staying from Monday, July 24.

Saint-Etienne have, like Saints, also recently appointed a new manager, with Red Bull Salzburg boss Oscar Garcia, who is the former chief of Brighton and Watford, arriving on a two-year contract in June.

Ex-Saints boss Claude Puel was heavily linked with the job before Garcia, who won the Austrian league and cup double during 2015-16 and 2016-17, was recruited.

Saint-Etienne finished 9th in Ligue 1 and reached the Europa League round-of-32, where they were beaten by Manchester United last season.

The French outfit play at the Stade Geoffroy-Guichard, which has a capacity of 42,000, although they'll be meeting Saints in the tiny Stade Municipal de Chambéry.

Romain Hamouma is one to look out for, having top scored with eight goals in all competi-

tions last season and contributing five assists.

Jordan Veretout, the former Aston Villa man is another dangerman, while Saint-Etienne also have Paul Pogba's brother, Florian, in their ranks.

FC Augsburg

League: German Bundesliga

Last season: 13th

Kick off: Wednesday, August 2, 7.45pm BST

Where: St Mary's

This will be Saints fans first opportunity to watch Mauricio Pellegrino's side in action, and by then things will have really taken shape under the Argentine.

The German side will be arriving in England to take on Middlesbrough and Saints, with their travels concluded at St Mary's on August 2 before heading back home the following day.

Much like Saints, Augsburg have been away on a training camp, having been in Italy for the past week or so.

Augsburg, who play at the 30,660 capacity Augsburg Arena, have established themselves as a top-flight side for the past seven seasons and have set themselves the target of trying to qualify for the Europa League next term.

Manuel Baum's side have been weakened, however, with the departure of Turkish international Halil Altintop, who has left for Slavia Prague and was top-scorer for the club with six goals in all competitions last season.

They have added to their team, though, with former Eintracht Frankfurt and Darmstadt 98 striker Marcel Heller brought in on a free transfer.

Sevilla

League: Spanish La Liga

Last season: 4th

Kick off: Saturday, August 5, 3pm BST

Where: St Mary's

The most high profile of all Saints' pre-season games and it comes just a week before the beginning of the Premier League season, when Mauricio Pellegrino's side host Swansea

It will be a stern test for Saints, with Sevilla a team full of quality and heading in to this season with hopes of going far in the Champions League.

Los Rojiblancos have won two of the last three Europa League tournaments, in 2014/15 and 2015/16. They were in the Champions League last season, losing to Leicester 3-2 on aggregate in the round of 16.

They have qualified for Europe's elite competition again, having completed a fourth place finish in La Liga last term.

While in charge of Alaves last season, Pellegrino lost 2-1 away and managed a 1-1 draw at home against Sevilla.

William Ben Yedder is one to watch having been Seville's top-scorer last season with 11 goals.

Kings Park is chosen for new ground

AFC Bournemouth have earmarked Kings Park athletics stadium and its own training pitches as the site for its new home.

The club has been searching for a site to build a new larger capacity stadium in response to the added demands of its Premier League status, with various locations around the town rumoured to have potential.

Last week it was reported on speculation that a new 25,000 stadium could be constructed in Kings Park, home of Cherries current Vitality Stadium, and the club has now confirmed it is working on these plans.

The club is working with Bournemouth council on the plans, and there has been speculation that the borough might buy Vitality Stadium off current owner Structadene. The council's cabinet is due to discuss a confidential 'specific asset purchase opportunity' at a meeting on Wednesday next week.

AFC Bournemouth chief executive, Neill Blake, said: "This is a major investment programme, not only for the football club but also for the town and the region."

"Our preferred site to build the club's new stadium is in Kings Park. There is still a long way to go in this process but we have overcome one of the biggest obstacles in identifying the area that we want to develop."

"We will now progress with detailed research and design for the new stadium, ahead of submitting the necessary planning application."

"Our original timescale of completion by the summer of 2020 remains, and we are currently working hard to provide our supporters with a bigger stadium and one that is befitting of a Premier League club."

Some months ago Cherries chairman Jeff Mostyn said the club had been given "very little choice" but to move.



Looking towards the Vitality Stadium from the King's Park Athletics venue.

Former Saints defender Harlee Dean, left, in action for Brentford against Eastleigh in the FA Cup last January.

Last season: 9th
Kick off: Saturday, July 29, 5.30pm BST

Where: Stade Municipal de Chambéry

To conclude Saints' pre-season trip to France, Mauricio Pellegrino's men will take on Saint-Etienne at the Stade Municipal de Chambéry, which is near to the

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Grassroots leagues to trial sin bins

The Football Association has announced the 32 grassroots leagues that will trial rugby-style 'sin bins' for dissent next season.

The 32 - none of which are in Hampshire, though the Dorset Premier League has been selected - were picked from 130 leagues at step seven in the pyramid and below that registered an interest in taking part in the pilot.

The chosen leagues have been selected to provide a mix of male, female, adult, youth, Saturday and Sunday football from across England.

Trials of temporary dismissals were approved at a meeting of law-making body the International Football Association Board (IFAB) in March and each national association was given discretion on whether to use sin bins for all cautions or just some.

The FA has chosen to focus on dissent, which accounted for a quarter of all yellow cards last season, as it ties in with the governing body's Respect campaign to protect referees and improve behaviour.

Players from the selected leagues who complain to officials next season can expect to spend 10 minutes off the pitch.

In a statement, the FA's head of judicial services Mark Ives said: "This is a fantastic opportunity to reduce dissent across the grassroots of the game.

"I am encouraged by the level of enthusiasm from county FAs, leagues, clubs and referees and in their collective commitment to make a difference to our great game at a local level.

"I look forward to seeing a positive impact during the course of the season."

The following leagues have been selected for the trial:

Anglian Combination League
Army Football League Massey
Birmingham & District League
Bolton, Bury & District League
Chester & Wirral League
Cumberland County League
Devon and Exeter League
Dorset Premier League
Durham County Women's
Evesham & District Sunday
League
Gloucestershire Women's
League
Gloucestershire Northern
Senior League
Hertfordshire Senior County
League
Hitchin Sunday League
Jersey Combination
JJ Jones Builders Duchy
League
Liverpool County FA Premier
League
Mid Sussex League
Mid Sussex Youth & Minor
League
Midwest Counties Female
North Staffs Youth League
Nottinghamshire Senior League
Notts. Amateur Alliance
Peterborough & District League
Potters & District Sunday
League
Sevenoaks and District League
Sheffield & District Junior
Sunday League
Southern Amateur League
Surrey Primary Youth League
Taunton & District Saturday
League
Trelawny League
Warrington Sunday League

NON LEAGUE



Gosport saved from winding up

GOSPORT Borough were this week saved from winding up after settling an undisclosed tax debt.

The petition - the fifth in 12 months - had been adjourned from last week to give the club time to pay.

Registrar Nicholas Briggs dismissed the HMRC petition at London's High Court after being told the debt had been paid.

The club were relegated from the National League South last season and are preparing for life back in the Southern Premier Division.

New Borough chairman Tony Stares was reported recently as saying there was no danger of the club folding and that the latest undisclosed debt would be paid.

Stares took on the chairman's

role purely in an advisory capacity and is not directly involved with the club's finances.

He is, however, trying to "untangle" the mess Gosport have got themselves into and says he has slashed the playing budget "by about 90 per cent."

Former chairman Mark Hook remains on the board of directors.

Stack's 'burning desire' to succeed

Wendy Gee



EASTLEIGH goalkeeper Graham Stack is preparing for a life outside football when he finally hangs up his gloves.

The 35-year-old former Arsenal and Barnet stopper is under contract with the Spitfires for the next two years and would ideally like a long-term future in coaching.

But, writing in an article on LinkedIn, he said he had spoken to professionals in various industries outside the game as he looks for an alternative career to fall back on.

Stack, who signed for Eastleigh in January after working with Steve Coppell at Kerala Blasters in the Indian Super League, boasts an UEFA Outfield A&B Licence, UEFA Goalkeeping A&B Licence and FA Youth Modules 1&2.

"I always believed I would naturally move into the world of coaching when my playing days are over," he wrote.

Passion

"I have good leadership skills, love being in a football environment and think my passion and enthusiasm, along with my coaching ability, are qualities that give me the edge over others.

"There are now more foreign coaches in the British game than ever before.

"There is now a record number of UK-based coaches with UEFA and FA qualifications than ever before, yet there is still the same amount of Football League clubs.

"Yes, there has been an increase in staff at clubs at the very top but, lower down the Football League, clubs are having to work on a restricted budget, employing



18 Feb 2017 - Photo Stuart Martin - Eastleigh v Tranmere Rovers - Graham Stack

the minimum amount of staff needed with some on a part-time basis.

"Academies have created lots of opportunities for coaches and I think we have recently seen the benefits of the programme coming to fruition with the success of England's under-20s and the quality of young British players we are now producing.

"My point and reason for writing this is simple; most footballers do their badges because it's a natural progression and all they know. It's an environment players are used to and feel safe in.

"Players tend to have a limited education and are unskilled in other sectors. It is also a game

they love and can't let go of.

"I know so many players now and in recent years who have done their badges who, when playing, had no intention or desire to coach. Players that never thought they would need to coach and players that simply didn't respect the coach."

Stack, in contrast, loves coaching and has a "burning desire" to be successful, but he is open-minded about the future.

"I am currently playing for Eastleigh FC and have a contract until June 2019. I am 35 and trying to prepare myself for life after playing," he continued.

"My wife and I set up an independent personal travel company

four years ago, which my wife runs, and I set up The Graham Stack Soccer Academy six years ago, which I am extremely proud of.

"While I am employed and earning an income, I believe now is the time to learn and gain as much experience in a job that I can potentially forge a career in for many years to come.

"I will be trying to achieve this while committing 100 per cent to performing day in day out on the pitch and being there for my wife and four children.

"Hopefully my career in football coaching will be a memorable and successful one, but I feel the need to prepare in case it isn't to be."

NON LEAGUE



Salisbury to sign Armed Forces Covenant

SALISBURY will be signing the Armed Forces Covenant prior to today's (July 15) pre-season friendly against Bristol Rovers at the Ray Mac.

The Covenant recognises the contribution of past and present service personnel, cadets, veterans and military families to our country and promises they are treated fairly.

The Evo-Stik South West club feels a close connection to the Armed Forces, being based close to the Salisbury Plain military training area as well as numerous barracks such as Bulford, Larkhill and Tidworth.

Hopefully the weather will allow a small signing ceremony on the pitch at around 12.45pm, prior to the 1pm kick-off.

Club chairman Ian Hammond said: "Salisbury as a city has a long and proud tradition of association with our neighbouring military, who make such a wonderful contribution to the nation.

"The new club of Salisbury FC echoes that pride and is delighted to be associated with this initiative and host this ceremony."

Walker could be out for 21 months

Ned Payne

TOM Killick could look to bolster Poole Town's defensive options after admitting Michael Walker's injury nightmare may sideline him for the upcoming season.

Walker has not played a minute of football for the Dolphins since suffering knee ligament damage during the 3-2 defeat at Concord Rangers in November.

The ex-Weymouth and Wimborne Town man was stretched off having landed awkwardly following a seemingly innocuous clash with former Poole loan striker Jordan Chiedozie.

Having finally gone under the knife a fortnight ago, Walker's wait for competitive football could reach up to 21 months depending on his recovery time.

And boss Killick revealed he may look for back-up ahead of the new National League South campaign.

"Michael Walker's operation got delayed quite a bit. One of the huge negatives about our level of football is you are reliant on the NHS and, understandably, getting back to playing football is not a huge priority for them," he said.

"You have to wait your turn and Michael's operation was delayed for a lot longer than we would ideally have wanted, so the result of that is that, while I haven't ruled it out, he probably won't be available all season.

"He had the operation a couple of weeks ago so you can see the amount of time we've lost. It might be a nine-month recovery, so if he has lost eight months, it's more likely he will miss the whole season rather than return before.

"We probably need a bit of cover in that area and, potentially,



Michael Walker, right.

either an attacking midfielder or a forward."

While Walker could spend the best part of two years on the sidelines due to his lengthy wait for surgery and subsequent recovery time, Killick believes the talismanic defender can make a return to the Dolphins fold.

He added: "If you look at profes-

sional players who have similar injuries, it's an horrendous time for them in terms of their recovery and the non-League players have the added issue of waiting for surgery. That's the most demoralising element of it all because you are not progressing, you are just waiting.

"Walks is a powerful personal-

ity and a strong character. I've got every confidence he will come back from this and we will be able to welcome him back into our squad. He is a really big part of the make-up of our club."

Walker has had four spells with Poole Town, playing a pivotal role in the club's rise from the Wessex League to National South.

PRE-SEASON FRIENDLIES

Saturday, July 15

Andover Town v Downton (Sparsholt College)
Blackfield & Langley v AFC Totton
Havant & Waterlooville v Farnborough
Moneyfields v Gosport Borough
Salisbury v Bristol Rovers (1.00)
Winchester City v Hanwell Town

Monday, July 17

Salisbury v Swindon Town (7.00)

Tuesday, July 18

AFC Totton v Havant & Waterlooville
Andover Town v Salisbury
Blackfield & Langley v Eastleigh
Hamble Club v Godalming Town
Newport IW v Portsmouth (7pm)
Winchester City v Sholing

Wednesday, July 19

Folland Sports v Gosport Borough.

Thursday, July 20

Bemerton HH v Gosport Borough

Friday, July 21

Alton v Eastleigh
Gosport Borough v Lymington Town
Hythe & Dibden v Brockenhurst
Sholing v Whitchurch Utd (7.30)

Saturday, July 22

Andover Town v Basingstoke Town
Bashley v Winchester City
Brockenhurst Development v Hamworthy Rec Res
Havant & Waterlooville v Sutton Utd
Hordean v Gosport Borough

Tuesday, July 25

Andover NS v Andover Town
Bashley v Wimborne Town
Bemerton HH v AFC Totton
Blackfield & Langley v Winchester City
Downton v Salisbury
Fareham Town v Moneyfields
Hordean v Havant & Waterlooville
Laverstock & Ford v Brockenhurst

Wednesday, July 26

Fawley AFC v Sholing
Folland Sports v Gosport Borough

Thursday, July 27

Bemerton HH v AFC Totton

Friday, July 28

Eastleigh v Sheffield Utd
Gosport Borough v Bognor Regis
Sholing v East Coves Vics (7.30)
Team Solent v Thatcham Town (3G)

Saturday, July 29

Andover Town v Hedge End Rangers (Sparsholt College)
AFC Totton v Chichester City
Brockenhurst Development v Shrewton
Hailsham Town v Brockenhurst
Hamble Club v Moneyfields
Hythe & Dibden v Lymington Town
Stockbridge v Totton & Eling
Wimborne Town v Gosport Borough
Winchester City v Alresford Town

Tuesday, August 1

AFC Stoneham v Eastleigh
Moneyfields v Winchester City

Thursday, August 3

Brockenhurst Development v Boldre Royals

Saturday, August 5

Salisbury v Basingstoke Town
Winchester City v Farnborough

*Friendlies subject to change.

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NON LEAGUE



CUP DRAWS (Local ties only)

FA VASE FIRST ROUND QUALIFYING

(Saturday, September 9): Tadley Calleva v Andover New Street, Shaftesbury v Brockenhurst Horndean v Andover Town, Hamble Club v Bemerton Heath Harlequins, Hamworthy United v AFC Stoneham, Amesbury Town v New Milton Town, East Cowes Victoria Athletic v Calne Town, AFC Aldermaston v Romsey Town, Warminster Town v Folland Sports, Newport (IoW) v Fleet Spurs, Guildford City v Lymington Town, United Services Portsmouth v Verwood Town, Ringwood Town v Eversley & California, Laverstock & Ford v Fawley, Cowes Sports v Baffins Milton Rovers, Hythe & Dibden v Bagshot.

SECOND ROUND QUALIFYING

(Saturday, September 23): Newport (IoW) or Fleet Spurs v Alresford Town, AFC Aldermaston or Romsey Town v Bournemouth, AFC Portchester v Tadley Calleva or Andover New Street, Knaphill or Sidlesham v Horndean or Andover Town, Fareham Town v Binfield, Godalming Town v Shaftesbury or Brockenhurst, Alton Town v Amesbury Town or New Milton Town, Cowes Sports or Baffins Milton Rovers v Selsey, Hamworthy United or Stoneham v Guildford City or Lymington Town, East Cowes Victoria Athletic or Calne v Downton, Sandhurst Town v Ringwood Town or Eversley & California, Warminster Town or Folland Sports v Ascot United or Farnham Town, Midhurst & Easbourne v United Services Portsmouth or Verwood Town, Swanage Town & Herston or Ash v Laverstock & Ford or Fawley, Windsor or Devizes Town v Whitchurch United, Cove or Westbury United v Christchurch, Bashley v Hythe & Dibden or Bagshot, Pewsey Vale or Chippenham Park v Camberley Town, Hamble Club or Bemerton v Petersfield Town or Corsham Town.

FA VASE PRIZE FUND

First Round Qualifying (220 winners) £550
Second Round Qualifying (170) £725
First Round Proper (101) £825
Second Round Proper (64) £900
Third Round Proper (32) £1,125
Fourth Round Proper (16) £1,875
Fifth Round Proper (8) £2,250
Sixth Round Proper (4) £4,125
Semi Final (2) £5,500 Final (1) £30,000.

FA YOUTH CUP PRELIMINARY ROUND

(week beginning September 4): Christchurch v Team Solent, Havant & Waterlooville v Salisbury, Poole Town v Farnborough, Alton v Slough Town (walkover to Alton - Slough withdrawn).

FIRST ROUND QUALIFYING

(week beginning September 18): Sholing v Wimborne Town, AFC Portchester v Romsey Town, Christchurch or Team Solent v AFC Stoneham, Poole Town or Farnborough v Fareham Town, Brockenhurst v AFC Totton, H&W or Salisbury v Winchester City, Windsor v Alton, Didcot v Oxford City or Basingstoke Town, Andover Town v Hungerford Town.

Ex-Havant man Donnelly joins Bluebirds



Lee Bradbury.

NATIONAL League South newcomers Chippenham Town have announced the signing of Scott Donnelly.

The 29-year-old attacking midfielder is a familiar face in Hampshire football, having plied his trade for Aldershot, Farnborough and Havant & Waterlooville.

Donnelly has also featured for Queens Park Rangers, Wealdstone, Swansea City and Newport County.

Chippenham boss Mark Collier, whose Bluebirds

side open the season with a home game against Havant on Saturday, August 5, said: "Scott joins us with a wealth of experience. He will add a real quality."

"Scott had numerous options. However, he was impressed with the club's vision and ambition."

Chippenham won promotion as champions of the Southern Premier Division, while Havant bounced straight back to the National League South as Isthmian League

winners following relegation in 2015/16.

Commenting on the opening day fixture, Havant boss Lee Bradbury said: "Chippenham are like us, having just got promoted and wanting to keep the momentum going. They have aspirations and the quality of squad to achieve them, so it is a tough start."

Donnelly's arrival follows Collier's recruitment of Weymouth trio Dean Evans, Mark Cooper and Jason Matthews earlier this summer.

Wessex champs' Magpies link-up

Wendy Gee



SYDENHAMS Premier Division champions Portland United have announced an "informal" link-up with Southern Premier neighbours Dorchester Town.

It will see the two clubs sharing selected players on a dual-registration basis.

The move means Dorchester boss Craig Laird and his Portland counterpart Simon Browne will have access to a greater pool of players, while allowing squad members to gain valuable playing experience.

Browne, who recently replaced Gary Bailey at the Portland helm, explained: "The idea is a relatively informal link-up. It gives Craig an avenue to use his squad to the level he wants and the option of loaning out players to a standard that will benefit his first team."

"The flip side is obviously that it will benefit us in that we will get a pool of players to choose from and we can get players in who have potentially got Southern Premier League experience."

"The idea is meant to be mutually beneficial."

Browne continued: "It's been well documented that there's been four or five ex-Portland players that are currently with Dorchester."

"If, for whatever reason, they drop out of the side, it might be that they go on loan at Portland. It's just getting players dual-registered."

Dorchester's assistant manager Trevor Senior said the partnership would enable the clubs to "help each other out."



Simon Browne

He explained: "Craig said he was interested in linking up with a club close to the level we're playing at."

"With a few of the lads coming from Portland to join us, it's a

case of sucking and seeing how it works out."

"We'll try and keep everybody happy, but it could be that some of the players that aren't getting regular game time can get foot-

ball with Portland."

"If we can help each other out, that's what we'll do. It's a way of looking to keep as many players on our books as we can and keeping them competitive."

NON LEAGUE



Castle appointed Hamble assistant boss



Chris Castle.

CHRIS Castle, brother of Sholing defender Pete, has been appointed assistant manager of Sydenhams Premier Division new boys Hamble Club.

Castle's arrival offers valuable support to Ben Kneller, who is now in outright charge of first-team affairs following Scott Marchant's decision to stand down as joint boss for family reasons.

A key driving force behind the club's rise from the Hampshire Premier League Division One to the Wessex top flight in the last four seasons, Marchant is not leaving the club completely - he is the new vice-chairman.

Saluting Marchant's huge contribution to the Hamble success story, Kneller said: "If Scott hadn't been at the club, we would never be

where we are today. He's had such a big impact on getting us this far.

"He's taken us from Hampshire One into the Wessex Premier.

"Scott's not walked away completely. He was here for our friendly against Pagham on Saturday and again for the Chichester game on Tuesday.

"But Scott's got a new baby and his two other boys are just starting to play football, so he's got a lot of family commitments and it would be difficult for him to be on the touchline all the time."

Although Kneller's new right-hand man Castle has no previous managerial experience, he has been in and around football for a long time.

"I've known Chris for years," said Kneller. "He's always followed his brother Pete around at different clubs and his dad was Netley Central manager.

"Chris has got a good football brain, he talks a lot of sense and the lads have really taken to him. It's good to have someone alongside me offering different ideas.

"Chris was behind us signing (striker) Sam Wilson and he'll be at the forefront of some other signings too.

"We've still got Matt Gregory on board, Nick O'Donnell is goalkeeping coach again this season and Jess Bunce, who was physio at Romsey last year, has joined us.

"We've also got Dave Cox, (player) Danny's dad, who's going to be kit-man for us."

Hamble excited with FA Vase tie



Hamble Club's Wessex Division 1 title winning squad from last season.

OF the 17 FA Vase first qualifying round ties involving Sydenhams League sides, nine are all Wessex affairs.

But while many clubs would rather venture outside familiar territory, Hamble Club boss Ben Kneller is happy to be playing Bemerton Heath Harlequins on familiar home territory in the first qualifying round on September 9.

The Monks, newly-promoted Sydenhams One champions, are in the Vase for the very first time ever and can't wait to get involved.

"We've only ever really been a Hampshire club, so it's all very exciting," said Kneller.

"I think it's nice to be playing Bemerton because we know quite a bit about them and we've got

Wendy
Gee



them at home.

"If we manage to win that one, we'd be at home again to either Petersfield Town or Corsham."

Hamble's neighbours Sholing have set the Vase standards for this part of the world, memorably lifting the trophy at Wembley in 2014.

"It's good to have another team from the area in the Vase," said Kneller.

"Baffins Milton Rovers, who were promoted with us, are also in it (away to Cowes Sports) and

Shaftesbury (home to Brockenhurst) were already in it last year, so all three clubs that came up are involved this year."

Sholing have received a bye through to the first round stage of the FA Vase, but have drawn a tough tie in the FA Cup extra preliminary round.

Brought forward

The Boatmen, who finished third in the Wessex Premier last term, will entertain Alresford Town who wound up seven points behind them in fifth.

The tie has been brought forward to Friday, August 4 at the Universal Stadium with the winners at home to either Thatcham

Town or Petersfield Town.

Both Winchester City and AFC Totton have landed away ties in the FA Cup and Trophy.

Winchester's Cup adventures take them to Bracknell Town or Cowes Sports in the preliminary round on August 19, while Kidlington is their destination for the FA Trophy preliminary round on October 7. Should they win that, they would host Slough Town.

Totton face an all-Hampshire tie preliminary round tie at Fleet Town in FA Cup, while their Trophy travels take them further afield to Evo-Stik South West rivals Taunton Town. Win that and the Stags would host Merthyr Town on October 28.

FA COMPETITION DRAWS 2017/18. LOCAL TIES ONLY.

FA CUP EXTRA PRELIMINARY ROUND

(Saturday, August 5): Bracknell Town v Cowes Sports, Thatcham Town v Petersfield Town, Christchurch v AFC Portchester, Farnham Town v Fawley, Bashley v Fareham Town, Hamworthy United v Bemerton Heath Harlequins, Team Solent v Brockenhurst, Badshot Lea v Verwood Town, Amesbury Town v Eversley & California, Camberley Town v Blackfield & Langley, Whitchurch United v Laverstock & Ford, Ringwood Town v Ascot United, Horndean v Melksham Town, Knaphill v Bournemouth, Newport (IoW) v Guildford City, Sholing v Alresford Town (Friday, August 4), Lymington Town v Andover Town.

FA CUP PRELIMINARY ROUND

(Saturday, August 19): Bracknell Town or Cowes Sports v Winchester City, Fleet Town v AFC Totton, Lymington Town or Andover Town v Wimborne Town, Godalming Town or Westfield v Farnham Town or Fawley, Christchurch or AFC Portchester v Amesbury Town or Eversley & California, Hamworthy United v Ringwood Town or Ascot United or Bemerton Heath Harlequins, Team Solent or Brockenhurst v Hartley Wintney, Newport (IoW) or Guildford City v Camberley Town or Blackfield & Langley, Salisbury v Bashley or Fareham Town, Badshot Lea or Verwood Town v Moneyfields, Whitchurch United v Knaphill or Bournemouth or Laverstock & Ford, Sholing or Alresford Town v Thatcham Town or Petersfield Town.

FA CUP PRIZE FUND

Extra Prelim rd winners (185) £1,500
Preliminary rd winners (160) £1,925]
First Rd Qual winners (116) £3,000
Second Rd Qual winners (80) £4,500
Third Rd Qual winners (40) £7,500
Fourth Rd Qual winners (32) £12,500
First Rd Proper winners (40) £18,000
Second Rd Proper winners (20) £27,000
Third Rd Proper winners (32) £67,500
Fourth Rd Proper winners (16) £90,000
Fifth Rd Proper winners (8) £180,000
Quarter Final winners (4) £360,000
Semi Final losers (2) £450,000
Semi Final winners (2) £900,000
Final runners-up (1) £900,000
Final winners (1) £1,800,000.

FA TROPHY PRELIMINARY ROUND

(Saturday, October 7): Taunton Town v AFC Totton, Fleet Town v Yate Town, Moneyfields v Bideford, Salisbury v Paulton Rovers, Kidlington v Winchester City, North Leigh v Wimborne.

FIRST ROUND QUALIFYING

(Saturday, October 28): Taunton Town or AFC Totton v Merthyr Town, Dorchester Town v Basingstoke Town, Salisbury or Paulton Rovers v Evesham United or Cirencester Town, Gosport Borough v Bristol Manor Farm or Cinderford Town, Fleet Town or Yate Town v Moneyfields or Bideford, Mangotsfield United or Thame United v North Leigh or Wimborne Town, Bishop's Cleeve or Larkhall Athletic v Farnborough, Swindon Supermarine or Barnstaple Town v Slimbridge or Hartley Wintney, Hereford v Weymouth, Tiverton Town v Banbury United, Kidlington or Winchester City v Slough Town.

FA TROPHY PRIZE FUND

Preliminary Rd winners (64) £3,000
First Rd Qualifying winners (72) £3,250
Second Rd Qual winners (36) £4,000
Third Rd Qual winners (40) £5,000
First Rd Proper winners (32) £6,000
Second Rd Proper winners (16) £7,000
Third Rd Proper winners (8) £8,000
Fourth Rd Proper winners (4) £10,000
Semi Final winners (2) £20,000
Final winners (1) £60,000

NON LEAGUE



Coulson's Hive stay is a short one

LUKE Coulson's stay in the Football League has been short-lived.

The talented wideman, who left Eastleigh for Barnet in January this year, has returned to non-League with Ebbsfleet United.

The Fleet – managed by another ex-Eastleigh man Daryl McMahon – are joining the Spitfires in the Vanarama National League this season after winning the VNL South play-offs.

Coulson, 23, spent nine years at Manchester City's academy before joining Cardiff City in 2012.

Eastleigh made him their record signing when he arrived from Oxford City in January last year and he impressed to such a degree that he earned an England C call-up. He turned his county down, however, because of the Spitfires' involvement in the FA Cup.

After scoring six goals in the first half of the 2016/17 season, Coulson became a record sale for Eastleigh when he joined Barnet.



Luke Coulson.

He made his Football League debut for the Bees as a substitute against Newport County on January 21, but was handed just four starts by the north Londoners, making 11 appearances in all.

Ebbsfleet boss McMahon said: "Luke has good experience, he's a player that will be familiar to Ebbsfleet fans."

"We all know what he was like at Oxford City, he terrorised us a couple of times."

"He's another one who's exciting and direct, good pace and a powerful runner."

"He's a good 1v1 player who can get goals."

"He went from Oxford to Eastleigh and did really well for them. He was talked of about getting a move to the Championship at the time."

"It didn't quite come through for him and it hasn't really worked out for him at Barnet, but he's coming in here at 23 years old and we've got another one at a good, young age with so much potential to do very well for us."

A Barnet statement said: "We would like to wish Luke all the best going forward in his career and thank him for his efforts whilst at The Hive."

Busy pre-season time for Michelmersh

MICHELMERSH & Timsbury's busy pre-season schedule continues with a trip to Sydenhams Premier Division outfit Newport IW today (Saturday, July 15 3pm).

The Hampshire Premier League outfit then play Broughton (away, July 22, 3pm), Fleet Spurs (away, August 3, 7.45pm), and Comrades (home, Hatches Farm, East Wellow, August 10, 7pm).

gust 10, 7pm).

Michelmersh reserves have three friendlies scheduled – all at Hatches Farm – against Totton & Eling Res (July 22, 3pm), Fareham Town Res (July 29, 3pm) and Bishops Waltham Dynamo (August 8, 7pm).

Today's opponents Newport kicked off pre-season with a 2-0 home defeat by Havant &

Waterlooville, followed by a 0-0 draw with Moneyfields. Their scheduled game against Isle of Wight neighbours Shanklin was rained off on Tuesday.

League One new boys Portsmouth are due to visit St George's Park this Tuesday (July 18, 7pm).

Magookin signs for merry Monks

Wendy
Gee



THE merry Monks of Hamble Club have ushered a new midfielder into 'The Abbey'.

Brad Magookin has joined the promoted Sydenhams One champions from Premier outfit Brockenhurst.

He made his first appearance for the Monks in their 6-1 mid-week friendly romp over Chichester City.

Having beaten Pagham 2-1 last weekend, Hamble were raining goals on a wet Tuesday night with Dougie Rowe (2), Nathan Lynch (2), Matt Troon and Coby Wilson on target.

Welcoming former AFC Bournemouth youngster Magookin into the fold, Hamble Club boss Ben Kneller said: "It had been on the cards for a while."

"He was at Bournemouth with (Hamble Club player) Murray Holmes, so that was the link."

"I think he also played at Wimborne with Nathan Lynch, so he knows a few of the lads."

"He'd been to a couple of training sessions and played his first game for us on Tuesday."

"He's good on the ball and moves it around very well."

"He looked comfortable and seemed to enjoy it, so that's really good."

Another midfielder Kneller has high hopes for is young Jack Barnes.

Just 17 years of age, he made an instant impression when he joined the Monks towards the end of the 2016/17 campaign and has picked up where he left off in pre-season.

"Jack's a central midfielder but is also comfortable at right-back," Kneller explained.

"He plays with a lot of energy and looks a good, young prospect."

Chichester – managed by for-



Brad Magookin signs for Hamble Club. Pic courtesy Hamble Club FC.

mer Moneyfields duo Miles Rutherford and Graeme Gee – were blown away by some sharp Hamble finishing on Tuesday.

The Monks weighed in with an impressive 133 league goals en route to the Sydenhams One title and again looked razor sharp in the final third.

"We looked very dangerous go-

ing forward and it was one of those nights when everything we hit went in," said Kneller.

"The only worry for us now is complacency after two good pre-season results."

"We're under no illusions that this is going to be a tough year for us."

"I've told the lads that the Wes-

sex Premier is very different to Wessex One.

"The players are fitter, stronger and more clinical and we'll be punished if we don't do things right."

"We're not going to win the league, but we've done well in pre-season so far and hopefully we've started as we mean to go on."

NON LEAGUE



Former boss joins Town board

THE new board of Basingstoke Town Community Football Club has increased to five with the addition of another former player and manager, Colin Stoker.

He joins Alan Turvey, Steve Williams, Will Wilkinson and Martin French.

Stoker managed the north Hampshire club when they won the Southern League title in 1985 with some talented local players.

As a professional engineer, his last full-time role was a partner in an international project and cost management consultancy.

Having served as chairman of Basingstoke Golf Club and worked to develop young golfers into adult champions, the new addition to the board has a good background for the needs of the new Community Club.

He is especially interested in

building on the achievements of the sports educational academy and the community coaching scheme and sees the development of young players from the community as critical to the club's success.

Community Club chairman Alan Turvey said: "We are delighted to see Colin coming forward to make a strong team even stronger."

Close on target for Pompey

BEN CLOSE has followed an impressive loan spell with Eastleigh by staking a claim for regular first-team football with League One new boys Portsmouth.

The 20-year-old gave new Fratton boss Kenny Jackett food for thought by striking twice in Tuesday's 6-3 friendly win at Poole Town - his second a stunning hit from outside the area.

That made it three pre-season goals for the Portsmouth-born midfielder, who frequently found the net at Academy level.

He has yet to net in 27 competitive first-team games for Pompey, but Jackett's assistant Joe Gallen has been impressed by the youngster who spent the latter part of last season gaining National League experience with the Spitfires.

Gallen said: "He's someone who maybe has not played a lot in the first team so far and was on loan at Eastleigh, but he is one we are working with and one we are

Oli makes an early impact for City

Wendy Gee



2-2 draw at Romsey Town.

"I was very happy with the work-out," declared boss Davis. "We just wanted them to go out tonight and work hard, express themselves and show what they are about as footballers."

Injuries to White and Dan Williamson were the only down side, but Davis is confident they are not too serious.

While conscious of not going overboard, director of football Dave Malone said: "Praise where praise is due - a well-deserved victory against a much-changed Gosport Borough.

"Make no mistake, we will have a solid and competitive team this season."

Winchester kept up the good work on Tuesday, losing a close match 1-0 at home to Hungerford Town of the National League South.

Ex-Totton striker Stefan Brown hit the outside of the post for Hungerford before Jon Boardman struck their second-half winner.

"I have a great relationship with their manager Bobby Wilkinson and he always takes our games very seriously, so we knew we were in for a test," said Davis.

With Bailey and Adam Tomasso on holiday and White and Williamson not risked, City were below full strength.

But they gave a good account of themselves first half before dropping off slightly in the second.

"We made a number of changes and the game fizzled out a little," said Davis. "It is frustrating when this happens, but we have to ensure players are given opportunities and protected from playing too many minutes."

OLI Bailey is going the right way about winning over Winchester City fans following the departure of hot shot Craig Feeney.

With 33 league and cup goals netted last season, Feeney - now back with his old club AFC Totton - is a hard act to follow.

But Bailey - formerly of the Saints Academy, Romsey Town and Swindon Supermarine - has already scored three times in two pre-season friendlies since joining the Citizens from National League South fall guys Gosport Borough.

Having found the net, along with Brett Stanley, in a 2-2 draw at Romsey Town, Bailey struck twice against his old club Gosport in a 3-2 win at the newly-named Simplyhealth City Ground.

It was the first chance for Citizens' fans to run the rule over manager Craig Davis' summer signings and it's fair to say that no one went home disappointed.

After Jack White had headed City into an early lead, Bailey - who left Privett Park just a matter of weeks ago - doubled Winchester's advantage.

Chilton Vine's shot on the turn made it 2-1 at half-time before Bailey struck again with a cracker into the roof of the net.

Gosport replied again following dogged work by Liam Kimber, but Winchester held out for the win their neat passing football deserved.

It took Bailey's pre-season goal tally to three in two games, having already scored - along with Brett Stanley - in a



Oli Bailey.



Ben Close.

hopeful we can bring on develop. "The fans love it when one of their own comes through the system and can play."

A Pompey XI had to claw back from 2-0 down to beat National League South outfit Poole at the Black Gold Stadium.

Tom Killick's Dolphins struck twice in the opening seven minutes through Oli Balmer and Luke Burbidge before succumbing to a brace apiece from Nicke Kabamba, Curtis Main and Close in front of a 407 crowd.

Ex-AFC Totton forward Luke Roberts was also on target for Poole, expertly cutting in from the right and firing a shot through 'keeper Jack Collins' legs. That made it 3-3 before Portsmouth eased clear in the closing stages. Kabamba, plucked from non-League football with Hampton & Richmond Borough, was not surprised Poole put up such a good show.

He told Portsmouth FC's official website: "I know that when you're at a non-League club and play against a big side, you see it as an opportunity to put yourself in the shop window.

"That's why they gave us a good game, but ultimately our quality came through in the end and we got the win."

NON LEAGUE



Thumbs up

Wendy
Gee



Matt Le Tissier scores for Saints Legends.



Gordon Watson in action for Saints Legends. Pix by James Newell.



The game is stopped after six minutes for a round of applause for football mascot Bradley Lowery, following the six-year-old's death.

MATT Le Tissier and Francis Benali have given Eastleigh's new pitch an emphatic thumbs up.

The pair were among the first players to grace the Silverlake surface, turning out for a Saints Legends side in a charity match to raise funds for the Royal British Legion.

The official baptism should have been on Saturday when AFC Wimbledon were due to play the Spitfires in a pre-season friendly. But the League One outfit pulled out due to concerns about the safety of their players on the newly-laid surface.

Following an inspection, the charity game was given the go-ahead for the following day and the pitch got the seal of approval from the ex-Saints.

Le Tissier, who scored in the 5-2 defeat against a largely younger, fitter Royal Navy select side on a blazing hot afternoon, tweeted: "Lovely day @EastleighFC raising funds for Royal British Legion. Well played the navy lads. Pitch held up well too."

Great day

Benali agreed: "A great day at @EastleighFC playing with Ex Saints v Royal Navy. Raising funds for @PoppyLegion Pitch was fine too."

Wayne "The Pie Man" Shaw, who had also featured in a penalty shootout during the club's Family Fun Day, tweeted: "Great day Great Weather Great Fun Lots raised for charity and the Pitch was Perfect."

Eastleigh were still finalising how much the charity match had raised this week but, with a crowd of 500-600 braving the soaring



Francis Benali in action against The Navy.

temperatures, it was a fine way to salute the Royal British Legion and mark the 100th anniversary of The Battle of Passchendaele.

With the agreement of the players, the referee stopped the game on six minutes and a minute's applause was held for brave, young Sunderland fan Bradley Lowery who sadly lost his fight against cancer, aged just six.

Eastleigh's head of community Gazz Davison said: "It was a great day. Everyone enjoyed themselves."

"The main aim of the match

was to remember those from the Battle of Passchendaele.

"It was a slow game and I think the Navy lads took it easy, but it was played in great spirit."

Up to 700 people enjoyed Eastleigh's annual Family Fun Day with Davison declaring it "a tremendous success."

Attractions included Zorbing, '70s kids' game Scalextric, a bouncy castle, bungee-trampolining, a fun fair, stalls, live music from the folk band Plaitford Common and a barbecue.



The Navy v Saints Legends at the Silverlake Stadium.

NON LEAGUE

from Matt



Wayne 'Pie Man' Shaw in penalty saving competition action.



Some of the people who attended the Eastleigh Fun Day.



Cooling off with an ice cream at Eastleigh's Fun Day.



Eastleigh FC Fun Day (from left) Benji McCall, Lauren Mason, Beth McCall and Leah Board.



Alei, Leo and Oliver Duncalfe.



From left - Pat Thorne, Debbie Burgess and Claire Wardrop.



A dog charity stall at Eastleigh's Fun Day.

Town fans urged to turn up to vital meeting

DECISIONS on the future of the Basingstoke Town need to be made quickly if the north Hampshire club is to survive.

The matter will be discussed by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council on Wednesday (6.30pm), when they will consider a report from portfolio holder, councillor Simon Bound.

Town fans are strongly being urged to attend and it is hoped the issue does not become a political football.

The major stumbling block for Basingstoke Town is they no longer own their ground and could be thrown out of the Camrose at any moment.

It has left the brand new board of the recently formed community club having to work with one arm tied behind their back.

This is because Basron, whose directors are Town owner Rafi Razzak and Malcolm McPhail, brought the land the ground stands on last year for £2.4 million.

They want to develop it and, when they apply for planning permission, the Dragons will have no option but to cease playing at the Camrose, their home for over 70 years.

It is a sorry state of affairs for the Southern Premier Division club - and this is despite the fact that when Lord Camrose gave the ground to the people of Basingstoke to use for sport in 1953, he included a covenant to run to this effect until 2052.

The Pink's sister paper The Basingstoke Gazette has seen the land registry documents of the sale of the site and it states it contains a covenant from 1953.

This means the council are the tenants with a lease and Basron the landlords.

Trying to invoke the covenant would involve a lengthy and costly legal battle with the outcome unsure.

The Camrose was meant to be a sporting venue for the people of Basingstoke for 100 years.

There are no sites in the borough to build a new football ground, so the ideal solution would be for the council to buy the site to preserve it as a leisure facility for the town.

Chairman of the community club Alan Turvey stressed: "The situation facing the club is truly pressing."

"Without a decision giving the security of a home, the question of continued survival gets more and more difficult."

Turvey added: "We understand and respect the view that the council taxpayer should not be simply expected to fund a solution."

"By working actively and positively in partnership with all interested others, it should be possible to find a way forward that is within the council's power, at no financial cost to the taxpayer and yields benefits for the community."

Turvey strongly urged those interested in the club's future to attend Wednesday's meeting to show their support for the survival of Basingstoke Town.

NON LEAGUE



SOUTHERN LEAGUE FIXTURES 2017/18

AFC TOTTON		SALISBURY		WINCHESTER CITY		GOSPORT BOROUGH	
EVO-STIK LEAGUE SOUTH WEST		EVO-STIK LEAGUE SOUTH WEST		EVO-STIK LEAGUE SOUTH WEST		EVO-STIK LEAGUE SOUTH WEST	
August		August		August		August	
12 Barnstaple Town	(H)	12 Mangotsfield	(A)	12 Shortwood Utd	(A)	12 King's Lynn Town	A
15 Bishops Cleeve	(A)	15 Paulton Rovers	(H)	15 Kidlington	(H)	15 Slough Town	H
26 Slimbridge	(H)	26 North Leigh	(A)	26 Larkhall Athletic	(A)	19 Royston Town	H
28 Salisbury	(A)	28 AFC Totton	(H)	28 Wimborne Town	(H)	26 Tiverton Town	A
						28 Basingstoke Town	H
September		September		September		September	
9 Yate Town	(H)	9 Shortwood Utd	(A)	9 Cirencester Town	(A)	9 Biggleswade Town	A
16 Taunton Town	(A)	16 Cirencester Town	(H)	16 Paulton Rovers	(H)	12 Farnborough	H
23 Larkhall Athletic	(A)	23 Yate Town	(A)	23 Mangotsfield Utd	(H)	23 Stratford Town	A
26 North Leigh	(H)	26 Swindon Supermarine	(H)	26 Didcot Town	(A)	26 Kings Langley	A
30 Paulton Rovers	(H)	30 Bishops Cleeve	(H)	30 Barnstaple Town	(A)	30 Hitchin Town	H
October		October		October		October	
14 Cinderford Town	(A)	14 Slimbridge	(A)	14 Bristol Manor Farm	(H)	7 Bishop's Stortford	H
21 Bideford	(H)	21 Evesham Utd	(H)	21 Taunton Town	(A)	9 Dorchester Town	A
24 Swindon Supermarine	(A)	24 Winchester City	(A)	24 Salisbury	(H)	14 Merthyr Town	A
						17 Banbury United	H
November		November		November		21 King's Lynn	H
4 Kidlington	(A)	4 Barnstaple Town	(A)	4 Cinderford Town	(A)	24 Slough Town	A
11 Mangotsfield Utd	(H)	11 Larkhall Athletic	(H)	11 Bishops Cleeve	(H)		
14 Didcot Town	(H)	14 Kidlington	(H)	14 Swindon Supermarine	(H)	November	
18 Shortwood Utd	(A)	18 Cinderford Town	(A)	18 Yate Town	(A)	4 St Neots Town h	
25 Evesham Utd	(H)	25 Bristol Manor Farm	(H)	25 Bideford	(H)	11 Frome Town	A
28 Wimborne Town	(A)	28 Didcot Town	(A)	28 North Leigh	(A)	15 Farnborough	A
						18 Dunstable Town	H
December		December		December		25 Kettering Town	A
2 Cirencester Town	(H)	2 Bideford	(H)	2 Evesham Utd	(H)	28 Kings Langley	H
9 Bristol Manor Farm	(A)	9 Taunton Town	(A)	9 Slimbridge	(A)	December	
16 Bishops Cleeve	(H)	16 Paulton Rovers	(A)	16 Kidlington	(A)	2 Hereford	H
23 Barnstaple Town	(A)	23 Mangotsfield Utd	(H)	23 Shortwood Utd	(H)	9 Redditch United	A
26 Salisbury	(H)	26 AFC Totton	(A)	26 Wimborne Town	(A)	16 Chesham United	H
						23 St Ives Town	A
January		January		January		26 Basingstoke Town	A
1 Winchester City	(A)	1 Wimborne Town	(H)	1 AFC Totton	(H)	January	
6 Taunton Town	(H)	6 Cirencester Town	(A)	6 Paulton Rovers	(A)	1 Weymouth	H
13 Slimbridge	(A)	13 North Leigh	(H)	13 Larkhall Athletic	(H)	6 Royston Town	A
20 Mangotsfield Utd	(A)	20 Larkhall Athletic	(A)	20 Bishops Cleeve	(A)	13 Tiverton Town	H
27 Kidlington	(H)	27 Barnstaple Town	(H)	27 Cinderford Town	(H)	20 Bishop's Stortford	A
						27 Dorchester Town	H
February		February		February		February	
3 Larkhall Athletic	(H)	3 Yate Town	(H)	3 Mangotsfield Utd	(A)	3 Banbury United	A
10 North Leigh	(A)	10 Swindon Supermarine	(A)	10 Didcot Town	(H)	10 Merthyr Town	H
17 Cinderford Town	(H)	17 Slimbridge	(H)	17 Bristol Manor Farm	(A)	17 Hitchin Town	A
24 Paulton Rovers	(A)	24 Bishops Cleeve	(A)	24 Barnstaple Town	(H)	24 Stratford Town	H
March		March		March		March	
3 Swindon Supermarine	(H)	3 Winchester City	(H)	3 Salisbury	(A)	3 Dunstable Town	A
10 Bideford	(A)	10 Evesham Utd	(A)	10 Taunton Town	(H)	10 Kettering Town	H
17 Bristol Manor Farm	(H)	17 Taunton Town	(H)	17 Slimbridge	(H)	17 Redditch United	H
24 Cirencester Town	(A)	24 Bideford	(A)	24 Evesham Utd	(A)	24 Hereford	A
31 Yate Town (A)		31 Shortwood Utd (H)		31 Cirencester Town	(H)	31 Biggleswade Town	H
April		April		April		April	
2 Winchester City	(H)	2 Wimborne Town	(A)	2 AFC Totton	(A)	2 Weymouth	A
7 Shortwood Utd	(H)	7 Cinderford Town	(H)	7 Yate Town	(H)	7 St Ives Town	H
14 Didcot Town	(A)	14 Kidlington	(A)	14 Swindon Supermarine	(A)	14 Chesham United	A
21 Wimborne Town	(H)	21 Didcot Town	(H)	21 North Leigh	(H)	21 Frome Town	H
28 Evesham Utd	(A)	28 Bristol Manor Farm	(A)	28 Bideford	(A)	28 St Neots Town	A

Totton impress in Shots friendly defeat

PROUD AFC Totton boss Louis Langdown described his players as “immense” after they held their own against Aldershot Town at the Testwood Stadium on Tuesday.

Having conceded twice in the opening 11 minutes against the Shots – who finished fifth in the National League last season – Totton settled into the game and could hold their heads high after a slender 2-1 friendly defeat.

When Corinthian Casuals capture Shaun Okojie and Idris Kanu struck so early, it looked as if the Stags could be in for a long night against a club three tiers higher on the non-League pyramid.

But summer strike arrivals Craig Feeney and Toby Adegunle both had decent efforts on the visitors’ goal – ex-Team Solent man Adegunle’s effort needing to be beaten away by ‘keeper Mark Smith.

Aldershot created more opportunities in the first half but Totton’s new goalkeeper Shane Murphy was in fine fettle, pulling off some solid saves to keep the Evo-Stik South West side in the game.

Shots’ rhythm was broken by making six substitutions, allowing Langdown’s men to build some momentum going forward.



It paid dividends in the 71st minute when club stalwart Nathaniel Sherborne – himself on as a sub - powerfully headed past replacement ‘keeper Jake Cole for 2-1.

Totton kept pushing for an equaliser, but it was Aldershot who threatened to extend their lead in the final minute.

Once again, however, ex-Dorchester man Murphy was on hand to deny Luca Wrightman.

Langdown tweeted: “Really proud of our club this eve @AFCTotton players were immense & our volunteers pulled together to host a strong @OfficialShots squad.”

Totton continue their pre-season programme away at Sydenhams Premier Division outfit Blackfield & Langley today (Saturday, 3pm).

They will be hoping for a better result on the Waterside after losing 1-0 to a Ben Bolton goal at Fawley AFC last week. Fawley’s Steve Green was allowed time to curve in a cross and Bolton soared between two defenders to glance a header into the top corner.

Fawley were themselves beaten 1-0 on

Stags at home on the opening day

AFC TOTTON will open the new Southern League season on home territory.

Louis Langdown’s men will entertain Barnstaple Town in the newly-named Evo-Stik League South West on Saturday, August 12.

Totton will be looking to atone for last term when they wrestled just one point off the men from Devon.

Having been held 1-1 at the Testwood

Stadium in mid-January, the Stags were edged 2-1 at Mill Road towards the end of the season.

Both Winchester City and Salisbury will kick off their league campaign on the road.

Craig Davis’s Winchester head to Gloucestershire to face Shortwood United, while Steve Claridge will lead Salisbury - last season’s beaten play-off finalists - to Bristol-based Mangots-

field United.

The August bank holiday sees AFC Totton travel to Salisbury and the return fixture will take place at the Testwood Stadium on Boxing Day.

Winchester will host Wimborne Town on Monday, August 28, and travel to the Dorset club on Boxing Day.

The Citizens host AFC Totton on New Year’s Day.

NON LEAGUE



Richard Luffman.

Magpies will be one of the fittest

MANAGER Richard Luffman is backing Alresford Town to be one of - if not THE fittest team - in the Sydenhams Premier Division this term.

To say the Magpies have been put through their pre-season paces would be an understatement.

For almost a month the boys

from Arlebury Park have had paratroopers drilling them three times a week.

That has come down to once a week now that friendly games have started, but the players' latest endurance test took them running up St Catherine's Hill, near Winchester.

Louise Adams, an ex-RAF of-

ficer who runs ParaFit, Winchester, is overseeing the drills.

According to Luffman, the results have been dramatic.

"There's not an ounce of fat on any of the lads now," he smiled.

"They're in excellent shape, they're all fit as a fiddle."

● Got a story for us? Email echosport@dailyecho.co.uk

Luffman's cheeky dig at Gosport

Wendy Gee



ALRESFORD Town boss Richard Luffman has made a cheeky dig at Gosport Borough after another of the Magpies' summer signings opted to step up into the Southern League.

While Luffman fully understands why former Portland United centre-back Ross Carmichael wants to test himself with Dorchester Town, striker Tyrell Mitford's move to Gosport still baffles him.

A season of unrest at Privett Park saw Borough relegated from the National League South last season and Gosport have been served with no fewer than five winding up orders over the last 12 months, albeit that they settled their debts on each occasion.

Commenting on Carmichael joining Dorchester, Luffman said: "We've allowed him to dual-sign for them.

"He knows a lot of Dorchester players and this is his last chance to play at that level.

"He's done it in the right way and we're happy that he's got the move to Dorchester.

"Unlike some, at least he's joined a proper Southern League club!

"If things work out for him at Dorchester, then he will stay there and play Southern League football.

"If not, we will welcome him back with open arms.

"This is what happens when you don't pay stupid money - you can't keep hold of people. But it shows how far we've come as a club that players signing for us are going into the Southern League."

Dorchester boss Craig Laird reckons the towering Carmichael "fits quite a few bills" for his side.

"He's a left centre-back which is



Alresford's pre-season training and, right, Ross Carmichael.

what we needed," he said.

"Can he step up and play at this level? I'm confident he'll be able to. I'm really pleased to get him. He'll come in on a non-contract deal."

Having given their blessing to fellow centre-back Rob Flook to move back to Winchester City, Alresford are looking to bolster their defensive options before the start of the Sydenhams Premier campaign.

"There's a couple of people we're talking to, including a former Eastleigh youngster," said

Luffman.

Alresford, meanwhile, have won the race to sign forward Matt Andrews.

The ex-Horndean and Petersfield Town striker put pen to paper after a pleasing 2-1 friendly win over Hartley Wintney, settled by goals from Steve Hall and Simon Everett.

"We beat off Andover Town and a couple of other clubs to sign him," said Luffman.

"Matt's a Portsmouth lad from Leigh Park who has also played for Fareham in the past."



Wimbledon champions

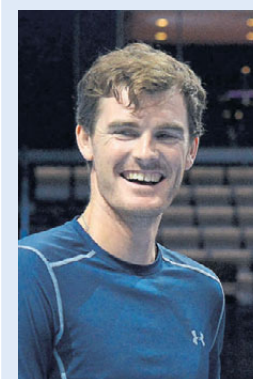
Jack Cunningham rounds up the British post-war winners in the Wimbledon Men's Doubles.

1947 - Tony Mottram, the father of tennis champion Buster, was runner up alongside Australian partner Bill Sidwell. They lost 8-6, 6-3, 6-3 to Americans Jack Kramer and Bob Falkenburg.

1960 - Brit Mike Davies and Bobby Wilson lost to Mexican Rafael Osuna and American Dennis Ralston 7-5, 6-3, 10-8.

2012 - Liverpool-born Jonathon Marray became the first Brit to win a post-war Men's Doubles title at SW19 when he partnered Dane Fredrik Nielson to a five-set victory over favourites Horia Tecau (Romania) and Robert Lindstedt (Sweden). 4-6, 6-4, 7-6, 6-7, 6-3

As a result, Nielson became the first Danish



Jamie Murray

player to win a Wimbledon title.

2015 - Jamie Murray, brother of World No 1 Andy, suffered a straight sets loss, alongside Australian John Peers, to the top seeds Jean-Julien Rojer and Horia Tecau. 7-6, 6-4, 6-4

British Men's Singles winners

2013 - Andy Murray became the first British player to win the Wimbledon men's singles title since 1936 when he beat Serbian Novak Djokovic 6-4, 7-5, 6-4. Murray had lost the previous year's final to Roger Federer.

2016 - Andy Murray defeated surprise finalist Milos Raonic 6-4, 7-6, 7-6 to claim his second title in three years at SW19.

PINK

Koeman's Euro dates

Ronald Koeman's big-spending Everton will face either Ruzomberok of Slovakia or Norwegian side Brann in their Europa League third qualifying round tie.

The Toffees finished seventh last season in the Premier League and were England's top seeds in yesterday's draw in Nyon, with Manchester United having secured a place in the Champions League after winning the Europa League final against Ajax last season.

Slender

Bran currently hold a slender 1-0 lead from the first leg of their second qualifying round tie, which was played on Thursday night in Slovakia. The second leg will be next Thursday.

Scottish Premiership side Aberdeen will meet either Apollon Limassol of Cyprus or Moldovan outfit Zaria Balti, if they can get past NK Siroki Brijeg.

The Bosnian's secured a 1-1 draw in the first leg of the second-qualifying round tie with the Dons at Pittodrie on Thursday.

League of Ireland Premier Division sides Cork City and Shamrock Rovers also have work to do if they are to progress into the third qualifying round.

Continued on page 17

18 British Open facts

The 146th Open Championship take place next week and here, the Sports Pink tees up the tournament with a "round" of 18 facts and figures.

1 - world number one Dustin Johnson has three top-10 finishes at the Open but has yet to win the tournament.

2 - Peter Thomson twice won the Open at this year's venue, Royal Birkdale. The Australian won the event five times in all.

3 - the last time Birkdale hosted the Open, in 2008, was the only time this century that nobody has finished under par - Padraig Harrington's winning score was three over.

4 - the most consecutive Open wins, by Young Tom Morris from 1868 to 1872 - the championship was not held in 1871.

5 - Thomson and Tom Watson each won their fifth Open at Royal Birkdale.

6 - only Harry Vardon has more



Dustin Johnson is still searching for his first Open success.

Open titles than that duo, with a record half-dozen wins between 1896 and 1914.

7 - the last seven major championships have seen first-time major winners, from Jason Day's success at the 2015 US PGA Championship to Brooks Koepka's recent US Open win.

8 - there were eight players in the first ever Open, in 1860. This year there will be 156.

9 - the lowest round in relation to par at an Open Championship is nine under; by Paul Broadhurst in 1990 and Rory McIlroy in 2010.

10 - this will be the 10th Open

contested at Royal Birkdale.

11 - Koepka's current world ranking as he prepares for his first major championship since his maiden win in such an event.

12 - early Open Championships were played over a 12-hole course, with three rounds.

13 - the record winning margin at the Open, by Old Tom Morris in 1862 over the 36-hole format.

14 - the number of courses to have hosted the Open.

15 - if a play-off is required in this year's tournament, it will be played over four holes starting at the 15th.

16 - the 16th is marked by a plaque commemorating Arnold Palmer's 1961 victory, which was aided by a famous iron shot into that green in the final round.

17 - the longest hole at Royal Birkdale, at 567 yards.

18 - it is 18 years since one of the most memorable Open finishes in modern times, when Jean van de Velde's meltdown allowed Paul Lawrie to claim victory at Carnoustie.

£1000 CASH GIVEAWAY

To celebrate the summer, we are giving 6 readers each week the chance to win a share of £1000 simply by answering the question and completing the entry form below. 1st prize £500 and 5 runners up winning £100 each!

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Question: What colour is a £20 note?

Answer
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 Postcode
 E-mail
 Daytime Tel No
 Year of Birth

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Terms and Conditions: This competition closes at 5pm on 22nd July 2017, when the winner/s will be selected at random from the correct entries received. The judge's decision will be final and no correspondence will be entered into. Employees of Newsquest and members of their family are not eligible to enter this competition. There is no equivalent for the cash prize offered which will be paid in the form of a cheque within 4 weeks of the closing date. Winners must be prepared to have their name published and picture taken to be eligible for the prize. Usual Newsquest terms and conditions apply please see dorsetecho.co.uk/competitionterms. This competition will be published in the Dorset Echo, Daily Echo and Southern Daily Echo with winners selected from all correct entries received.

PINK

Justin searching for another taste of Open magic ...

Jack Cunningham

IT'S been almost 20 years since Hampshire's Justin Rose shot to stardom in the British Open by finishing fourth as an amateur.

Here, the Sports Pink looks back at his Open record ahead of next week's tournament.

1998 - Rose shot to national prominence when, aged just 18, he finished in a four-way tie for fourth on his Open debut.

Along with Jim Furyk (USA), Raymond Russell (Scotland) and Jesper Parnevik (Sweden), Rose finished just two shots adrift of winner Mark O'Meara at Royal Birkdale. As a result, he banked £76,667 - not a bad payday work for a teenager!

1999 - Rose failed to make the cut 12 months later in a tournament where Paul Lawrie famously defeated Jean van de Velde in a play-off at Carnoustie.

Lawrie, down by ten strokes at the start of the final round, completed the biggest final round comeback in major championship history - helped by van de Velde's triple-bogey at the last hole.

2000 - Rose did not play in a tournament where Tiger Woods, then 24, won his first Open Championship and fourth major - eight strokes ahead of runners-up Thomas Bjørn and Ernie Els at St Andrews.

2001 - Rose tied for 30th in a tournament won by American David Duval, who was three shots clear of Swede Niclas Fasth at Royal Lytham & St Annes.

2002 - Rose tied for 22nd at Muirfield, where South African Ernie Els won his first Claret Jug and third major title in a play-off over Stuart Appleby, Steve Elkington, and ultimately in a sudden-death play-off over Thomas Levet.

2003 - Rose did not make the cut at Royal St George's, where Ben Curtis became the first debut winner of the The Open since Tom Watson in 1975. Curtis won by one stroke from runners-up Thomas



Justin Rose

Bjørn and Vijay Singh.

2007 - After failing to appear in the Open for three years, Rose enjoyed his second best Open finish - tied for 12th at Carnoustie. Pádraig Harrington defeated Sergio García in a play-off to take the title and his first major.

2008 - Back at Royal Birkdale, Rose was tied for 70th. Pádraig Harrington defended his Open title, finishing four strokes ahead of runner-up Ian Poulter.

2009 - Rose finished two over par in a tie for 12th at Turnberry. Stewart Cink won his only major after a four-hole playoff with Tom Watson. Aged 59, Watson had the chance to win his sixth Open - and become the oldest major champion in history - during regulation play, but was unable to par the fi-

nal hole and tied with Cink.

2010 - Rose failed to make the cut at St Andrews, where Louis Oosthuizen won his only major - seven strokes clear of runner-up Lee Westwood.

2011 - Rose was well down the field, tied for 44th at Royal St George's, as Irishman Darren Clarke won his only major championship, three strokes ahead of runners-up Dustin Johnson and Phil Mickelson.

2012 - Rose failed to make the cut at Royal Lytham & St Annes Golf Club as Els Ernie won his second Claret Jug, one stroke ahead of runner-up Adam Scott.

2013 - Rose, the reigning US Open champion, again failed to make the cut as American Phil Mickelson shot a final round 66

(five under) to win his fifth major title, three strokes ahead of runner-up Henrik Stenson.

2014 - Rose finished tied for 23rd as Rory McIlroy won by two strokes from runners-up Rickie Fowler and Sergio García. In doing so, McIlroy became only the sixth golfer to win the championship after being the sole leader after each round.

2015 - Rose finished joint sixth, his best Open display since his debut in 1998. He was only four shots behind winner Zach Johnson, who defeated Marc Leishman and Louis Oosthuizen in a Monday play-off. Rose earned £183,250 for his efforts.

2016 - Rose tied for 22nd as Swede Henrik Stenson, who carded a record 20-under par total - three strokes ahead of runner-up Phil Mickelson - became the first Scandinavian to win a major.

All-Brit final in 1961

Jack Cunningham rounds up the post-war years where a Brit has featured in the Wimbledon Women's Singles final.

1956 - Angela Buxton lost to American Shirley Irwin 6-3, 6-1

1958 - Angela Mortimer lost to American Althea Gibson 8-6, 6-2.

1961 - The first all British women's final since 1914 saw Angela Mortimer beat Christine Truman 4-6, 6-4, 7-5.

1967 - Ann Jones lost 6-3, 6-4 to American legend Billie Jean King.

1977 - Virginia Wade defeated Betty Stove of the Netherlands 4-6, 6-3, 6-1.



Virginia Wade

Women's doubles

1955 - Angela Mortimer and Anne Shilcock won an all-British final against Shirley Brasher and Patricia Hales 7-5, 6-1.

The pair were the first all British duo since Freda James and Kay Stammers in 1936 to win the title.

1956 - Angela Buxton and American Althea Gibson beat Australians Mary Hawton and Thelma Coyne 6-1, 8-6.

1959 - Christine Truman and her American colleague Beverley Baker lost to Americans Jeane Arth and Darlene Hard 2-6, 6-2, 6-3.

1968 - Ann Haydon-Jones and Frenchwomen Francoise Purr were beaten by Americans Rosemary Casals and Billie Jean King 3-6, 6-4, 7-5.

1970 - Virginia Wade and Francoise Durr (France) lost to Rosemary Casals and Billie Jean King 6-2, 6-3.

PINK

Brits in the Mixed final

Jack Cunningham takes a look at the post-war years where a British player has reached the final of the Wimbledon Mixed Doubles.

1962

Ann Haydon-Jones and Dennis Ralston came runners up to Neale Fraser and Margaret DuPont 2-6, 6-3, 13-11.

1969

Ann Haydon-Jones and Fred Stolle beat Australians Tony Roche and Judy Tegart Dalton 6-2, 6-3.

1974

Brits Mark Farrell and Lesley Charles came runners up to Owen Davidson and Billie Jean King 6-3, 9-7.



John Lloyd

1982

John Lloyd and Australian Wendy Turnbull lost to Kevin Curran and Betty Stove 2-6, 6-3, 7-5.

1983

Lloyd and Turnbull made up for the previous year's final heartache when they beat Americans Steve Denton and Billie Jean King 6-7(5-7), 7-6(7-5), 7-5.

1984

Lloyd and Turnbull retained their title, beating Steve Denton and Kathy Jordan 6-3, 6-3.

1987

Jeremy Bates and Jo Durie were the first all-British pairing to win the mixed doubles since 1936 after beating Australians Darren Cahill and Nicole Provis 7-6, 6-3.

2007

Jamie Murray and his Serbian partner Jelena Jankovic beat Swede Jonas Bjorkman and Australian Alicia Molik 6-4, 3-6, 6-1.

Clark holds record for most Brit GP victories



Lewis Hamilton

Drivers and racing fans alike will descend on Silverstone this weekend for the 2017 Rolex British Grand Prix.

Here, the Sports Pink takes a look at the numbers behind Formula 1's British showcase event.

1950

the year in which the first ever British GP was held, it was also the first ever Formula One race ever held.

3.66

the circuit length of Silverstone, in miles.

190.32

the race length of the British GP, in miles.

52

number of laps in the race.

5

number of times Jim Clark won the British GP, the most wins by a British driver and the joint-most by a driver of any nationality (shared with France's Alain Prost).

4

number of times Lewis Hamilton has won the race at Silverstone, the same number as Nigel Mansell.

3

Hamilton has won at Silverstone for the past three years.

15

number of times a driver from Ferrari has won the British GP, a record number for a constructor.

12

British GP winners at Silverstone (Stirling Moss, Tony Brooks, Peter Collins, Jim Clark, Jackie Stewart, James Hunt, John Watson, Nigel Mansell, Damon Hill, Johnny Herbert, David Coulthard and Lewis Hamilton).

New word added to the dictionary

A new word was added to the sporting dictionary when Natalie Sciver performed what has been termed the 'Natmeg' during England's victory over New Zealand in the Women's World Cup on Wednesday.

The 24-year-old's trick shot saw her play a leg-stump yorker through her legs and away to square leg.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at other sporting terms which have been named after athletes.

1. Panenka

Czechoslovakia international Antonin Panenka brought this cheeky chipped penalty technique to the world's attention during the shootout which decided the final of Euro 1976 in Yugoslavia. Uli Hoeness' miss for West Germany gave the Czechs the opportunity for victory and Panenka kept his nerve to calmly dink the ball down the middle as Sepp Maier dived out of the way. The technique has been replicated numerous times, with mixed results.

2. Axel jump

Named after Norwegian skater Axel Paulsen, the Axel is a figure skating jump with a forward take off. Compared to other common figure skating jumps, it has an extra half rotation in the air. Paulsen first performed it competitively when he won the 1882 World Championships in Vienna, reportedly earning an extra prize for introducing a new jump.

3. Fosbury Flip

American Dick Fosbury revolutionised the high jump with a technique which remains the dominant one today. The skill



Antonin Panenka chips the winning penalty in 1976.

requires athletes to curve their run as they approach the jump and then launch themselves over the bar backwards. Aged just 21, Fosbury used the method to win gold at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City, setting a new Olympic record of 2.24m in the process. The technique was aided by the introduction of cushioned landing mats with athletes previously landing on their feet.

4. Biles

This move was officially recognised in 2013 at the Gymnastics World Championships in Antwerp. It is named after American Simone Biles, a 20-year-old who won four gold medals at the 2016 Olympics and is credited by many with turning the artistic gymnastics world upside down. The 'Biles' is performed on the floor exercise and involves a double flip with half twist. The twist comes near the end of the second flip, meaning the gymnast lands

facing forward.

5. Cruyff Turn

The famous feint gained global attention when former Holland international Johan Cruyff outwitted Swede Jan Olsson at the 1974 World Cup in West Germany. With the Swede in close proximity just outside the penalty box, Cruyff dummied to cross the ball and then hooked it behind him, turned 180 degrees and accelerated away from Olsson.

PINK

The big Open issues

Henrik Stenson will defend his Open Championship title at Royal Birkdale next week as the year's third major championship takes place from July 20-23.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at five talking points ahead of the tournament.

1. Can Stenson become the first back-to-back winner for nine years?

Padraig Harrington was the last player to successfully defend the Open title, coincidentally when it was last staged at Royal Birkdale in 2008. Stenson's form this season has been something of a mixed bag, with five top-10 finishes and four missed cuts, two of those coming in the Masters and US Open. However, the 41-year-old Swede was third at Birkdale in 2008 after recovering from an opening 76 and while a repeat of last year's record-breaking feats at Royal Troon might be asking a bit much, he certainly has the talent to mount a title challenge.

2. Will there be a first English winner in 25 years?

While Northern Ireland has produced two Open champions in the last six years and Scotland's Paul Lawrie lifted the Claret Jug in 1999, Nick Faldo's third victory at Muirfield in 1992 remains the last by an Englishman. The chances of that depressing statistic ending at Birkdale look good though, with 12 English players in the world's top 100 and



Rory McIlroy

the likes of Tyrrell Hatton, Andrew Johnston, Andy Sullivan and Matthew Southgate all finishing in the top 12 last year.

3. Can Rory McIlroy contend after an injury-plagued campaign?

McIlroy's season has been thrown into disarray by the rib injury suffered during extensive club testing over the winter,

which kept him sidelined for six weeks after losing a play-off in the South African Open. McIlroy finished seventh, fourth and seventh in his first three strokeplay events on his return, but a recurrence of the problem saw him withdraw from the BMW PGA Championship and Memorial Tournament. After missing the cut in the US Open he was 17th in the Travelers Championship, but then missed the cut in

defence of his Irish Open title at Portstewart.

4. Is a shock winner possible?

Since Darren Clarke and Keegan Bradley won the last two majors of 2011 when ranked 111th and 108th in the world respectively, the lowest-ranked winner of any major has been Jimmy Walker, who was 48th when he won last year's US PGA Championship. Fellow 2016 champions Danny Willett, Dustin Johnson and Henrik Stenson were ranked 12th, sixth and sixth respectively, while Sergio Garcia was 11th before claiming his overdue maiden major title at the Masters in April and Brooks Koepka 22nd before his US Open triumph at Erin Hills.

5. Why is the prize money in dollars this year?

Making the switch from sterling to dollars had been on the agenda since the fall in the value of the pound following the vote to leave the European Union last June. Speaking in February, R&A chief executive Martin Slumbers said it was a "significant issue" for the only major championship staged outside of the United States. The winner at Royal Birkdale will win 1,845,000 US dollars (£1.4m) from a total prize fund of 10.25m dollars (£7.9m), a significant increase on the £1.175m claimed by Stenson in 2016. Brooks Koepka won a record 2.16m dollars (£1.67m) for his US Open victory at Erin Hills last month.

from page 14

Cork lost 1-0 at home against Cypriots AEK Larnaca on Thursday night, while Shamrock Rovers were beaten 3-2 at home by Czech side Mlada Boleslav.

Should Cork reach the third qualifying round, they have been paired with Rabotnicki of Macedonia or Belarus team Dinamo Minsk. The first leg of that tie ended 1-1 in Skopje.

Shamrock Rovers were drawn against either Kazakhstan side Kairat Almaty or Albanians Skenderbeu, who are also locked at 1-1 ahead of the return leg in Korce.

Yesterday's draw saw 29 fixtures decided, which were split into five groups, with the first legs set to be played on July 27 and the second on August 3.

Italian club AC Milan will face CSU Craiova of Romania, while Ligue 1 side Marseille tackle Oostende of Belgium.

Dutch team PSV Eindhoven will take on the winner of Croatian outfit Osijek or Swiss club Luzern while Turkish giants Fenerbahce meet Austrians Sturm Graz or Mladost Podgorica of Montenegro.

The winners will then advance to the Europa League play-off round, which will also include the 15 losers from the Champions League third qualifying round.

The draw for the Europa League group stages will be made on August 25, with 16 teams having gained automatic entry - including FA Cup winners Arsenal, who finished fifth in the Premier League to miss out on the Champions League for the first time in 20 years.

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WHO'S IN?



YOUTH FOOTBALL NOSTALGIA 2012-2014 - CAN YOU



Sholing Reds U10s.



Colden Common Royals U9s



Sarisbury Sparks White U9.



Botley Village Tigers U9s



Fordingbridge U15s.



Winchester Youth U10s



Warsash Wasps Yellow U10s



Waltham Wolves U12.



Fordingbridge Under 12s



AFC Hiltingbury Harriers U10s



St Francis Knights.



Southbrook Rangers U10s

SPOT ANY FAMILIAR FACES IN THESE PHOTOS?



AFC Hiltingbury Hawks U10s



Oakwood Saints



North Baddesley Templars U10s



Warsash Wasps Yellow



Bashley Blades



AFC Stoneham U10's



Hedge End Youth Comets



Eastleigh Reds U10s.



Hedge End Rangers Lions u10.



Pace Pumas U9s



Oakwood Lions U10s.



Pace Youth U13.

YOUTH FOOTBALL NOSTALGIA 2012-2013 - CAN YOU



Hedge End Planets



Hythe Strikers Spitfires



Brendan Black



Stoke Park Rangers



Wyvern



Oakwood Harriers U10s



Hythe and Dibden Dragons Under 9s.



Hedge End Rockets Under 9s.



Warsash Wasps Under 9s



Pace Pumas Under 10s



Sarisbury Sparks U9s



Netley Royals Under 9s.

SPOT ANY FAMILIAR FACES IN THESE PHOTOS?



Hythe and Dibden Dragons.



Sarisbury Sparks Under 10s.



Colden Common Rovers



Warsash Wasps Yellows



Salisbury City U10s



Sholing Reds



Oakwood U9s.



Southbrook U10s



Chamberlayne Athletic



Hythe and Dibden Tigers U10s



Wellow



QK Southampton U13s

YOUTH FOOTBALL NOSTALGIA 2011-2012 - CAN YOU



Eastleigh Blues



AFC Hiltigbury U10s.



Fawley Falcons



City Central



Colden Common Royals



Pace Pumas



Townhill Lingland U9s.



Testwood United Dragons U9s.



Warsash Wasps U9s



Hythe and Dibden Hornets U10s.



Hiltigbury Hurricanes U10s.



Sports Stars U10s

SPOT ANY FAMILIAR FACES IN THESE PHOTOS?



Tadburn U10s.



Hedge End Tiger Cubs U10s.



Sarisbury Sparks U10s.



Hythe and Dibden U10s.



Baddesley Park U10s



Hythe Strikers Spitfires



Oakwood U10s



Hedge End Youth Stars



Sarisbury Sparks



Netley Royals



Pirelli Pirates



Granley Stoneham

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HANTS CRICKET



Pre-Test football with Alastair Cook, Toby Roland-Jones, Jonny Bairstow and Stuart Broad



Bowling in a pre-match nets session



Leaving the field after being trapped lbw by Morne Morkel on day two



Liam Dawson finished with respectable match figures of 26.4-6-101-4

Dawson makes Lord's Test bow

Simon Walter



LIAM Dawson is enjoying an extended run in the England Test side after making his home debut at Lord's last week.

The all-rounder had only played three one-day games at Lord's (including Hampshire's wins in the 2009 and 2012 Trophy finals), before helping England beat South Africa in the first Test.

He admits he had a nervy start with the ball and was dismissed for a pair of two-ball ducks.

"I usually deal with nerves pretty well," he said.

"But this time I was just too nervous and I have got to handle that better next time - and I think I will be better for it."

"It is natural, but I think it did



Appealing for a wicket on day two (he took 15-2-67-2 in the first innings)

have an impact on the way I bowled in the first innings.

"I was nowhere near my best there, but I like to think I bowled well (in the) second innings."

Dawson finished with match figures of 4-101 and enjoyed his brilliant dismissal of Hashim Amla, who was trapped lbw on the back leg as England won by 211 runs.



Discussing tactics with England captain Joe Root on day three



Celebrating the wicket of Kagiso Rabada on day three

HANTS CRICKET



Rod expects title bid from Hants

Simon
Walter



ROD Bransgrove believes Hampshire's best Specsavers County Championship performances are still to come – and has backed George Bailey's side to challenge for the title till the season's end.

Hampshire are third in division one after playing eight of their 14 games, 30 points behind leaders Essex, who have a game in hand.

They are now in the middle of a month focused on the Natwest T20 Blast before the chase for the Championship resumes against Lancashire at the Ageas Bowl on August 6.

"At the halfway stage you could say we're ahead on points," says Bransgrove.

"We're carefully placed, there's a lot yet to emerge and we haven't fully hit our straps.

"We've played well in spurts but injuries have hampered us again. Losing our main strike bowler in the first innings of games seriously affects outcomes.

"So I would say we're handily placed without ripping up any trees, but with a side that's capable of doing anything."

Inconsistency has been Hampshire's downfall during the first half of the season.

They began with a stunning win against Yorkshire at Headingley and have also beaten Somerset and Warwickshire.

But Hampshire lost to Essex and Lancashire, the two teams above them, by an innings and 97 runs and an innings and 30 runs respectively.

"We seem to have collective off days, which is something I know both of the Whites (director of cricket Giles and head coach Craig) are addressing," continued Hampshire's chairman.

"George and James [Vince] have been looking at these in some detail to make sure we avoid these in the future.

"Equally, we seem to be able to beat anybody on our good days."

With Reece Topley and Chris Wood fit again and Fidel Edwards expected to be available for Lancashire's visit, Hampshire's seam stock is well resourced for the last six matches.

"We've still got half a season to go and it'll probably be the best half of the season for us," continued Bransgrove.

"Hopefully we can keep everyone fit from now on.

"One or two players are coming back from injury so we've got a good stable.

"One or two good performances and we'll be right up there chasing Essex."



George Bailey (Mark Sandom). Inset: Rod Bransgrove

All being well, Hampshire will still be title contenders when Essex visit the Ageas Bowl for the penultimate match of the season on September 19.

"It's all up for grabs at the moment," added Bransgrove.

"There's everything still to play for and we'll be up there chasing for sure.

"Essex have had a fabulous start but have also had Alastair Cook in the side so far and he gives any team a great advantage."

Bransgrove is also confident Hampshire can make up for their disappointing Royal London One-day Cup campaign in the T20 Blast.

Hampshire failed to qualify from the group stage, finishing in the bottom half of the south division with four defeats - including the failure to defend 332-6 against Glamorgan after James Vince's record 178.

"The One-day Cup was a disappointment, one or two games there

showed how we can sometimes lose grip of a very good position and that let us down," continued Bransgrove.

"But we're now bouncing back into the T20 which historically has been our strong suit so I'm hopeful we'll find our way again to the top there.

"It was a particularly good performance in Cardiff last week.

There'll be other hurdles to get over but the squad is strong on paper.

"We should be able to hold our own against anyone.

"It's a squad hungry to win something, there's a collective belief in the dressing room.

"We just need to be consistent and get the confidence of winning back."

If Shahid Afridi plays like he did in 2011, with Mason Crane as his new spin twin, Hampshire should progress to the quarter-finals and

maybe even repeat their successes of 2010 and 2012.

"Afridi's amazing, he's like Peter Pan, his age is getting lower every year and he just looks fitter every year," laughs Bransgrove.

"He's just an amazing cricketer, a legend and we're very grateful to have him again. He'll win games for us."

Afridi's arrival has been especially timely given Liam Dawson's England call-up.

"Liam's clearly right up there in the selectors' thinking," added Bransgrove. "He's a useful addition to any squad and we need to get used to him not being with us."

"All-rounders are the most difficult to replace of course but others are knocking on the door.

"Gareth Berg is performing well and young Ian Holland has been showing signs of development there as well."

2017 results & fixtures

APRIL

2-4 Cardiff MCCU (h) FR
Hants 289 (Carberry 100) & 271-6d (Vince 90) drew with Cardiff 98 & 110-2.

7-10 Yorkshire (a) CC1
Yorkshire 273 & 187 (Abbott 7-41), Hants 141 & 321-6 (Adams 72). Hants won by 4 wickets

14-17 Middlesex (h) CC1
Middlesex 456 (Wheal 4-98) & 278-9 (Abbott 5-59), Hants 438 (Rossouw 99, Carberry 98). Drawn.

21-24 Yorkshire (h) CC1
Hants 455 (Vince 147, Berg 99no), Yorkshire 231 (Berg 4-62) & 399-6 (Abbott 3-65). Drawn

27 Kent (a) 50L
Kent 258, Hants 260-4 (Alsop 112no). Hants won by 6 wickets.

30 Essex (a) 50L
Essex 304-7, Hants 279 (Vince 68, Bailey 63). Hants lost by 25 runs.

MAY

3 Middlesex (h) 50L
Middlesex 295 (Gubbins 114, Topley 4-68) beat Hants 146-7 (Bailey 52no) by 89 runs (D/L)

7 Gloucestershire (h) 50L
Hants 239-3 (Vince 89*) beat Gloucs 237 (Dawson 3-30) by 7 wickets

10 Somerset (a) 50L
Hants 250-6 (Rossouw 156) beat Somerset 249 (Berg 3-44) by 4 wickets

12 Glamorgan (h) 50L
Hants 332-6 (Vince 178) lost to Glamorgan 334-7 (Crane 3-69) by 3 wickets

14 Surrey (a) 50L
Hants 271-8 (Bailey 145no) lost to Surrey 238-2 by 66 runs (D/L)

17 Sussex (h) 50L
Match abandoned

19-22 Essex (a) CC1
Essex 360 (K Abbott 5-58) beat Hants 115 & 148 by an innings and 97 runs.

26-29 Somerset (a) CC1
Hants 162 & 293 (Carberry 51) beat Somerset 197 & 168 (Crane 5-40) by 90 runs

JUNE

2-5 Warwickshire (h) CC1
Hants 515 (Adams 166, Ervine 203) beat Warks 254 & 167 by an innings and 94 runs

8-11 South Africa A (h) Fr
South Africa A 370-7d & 185-1d beat Hampshire 185 & 119 by 251 runs.

19-22 Lancashire (a) CC1
Hants (395 & 168) lost to Lancs (593) by an innings and 30 runs

26-29 Somerset (h) CC1
Hants 211-9d & 96-5d drew with Somerset 147 & 88-8

JULY

3-6 Surrey (a) CC1
Hants 648-7d, Surrey 483 & 166-3 (fo). Draw

7 Glamorgan (a) T20. Won by 22 runs
12 Sussex (a) T20. Won by 19 runs

14 Middlesex (h) T20
20 Sussex (h) T20
21 Essex (a) T20

23 Surrey (h) T20
26 Somerset (a) T20
28 Gloucestershire (a) T20

AUGUST

1 Kent (h) T20
3 Middlesex (Lord's) T20
4 Essex (h) T20

6-9 Lancashire (h) CC1
10 Glamorgan (h) T20
11 Kent (a) T20

18 Somerset (h) T20
22-25 T20 QF
SEPTEMBER

2 T20 Finals Day
5-8 Surrey (h) CC1
12-15 Middlesex (a, tbc) CC1

19-22 Essex (h) CC1
25-28 Warwickshire (a) CC1
Key

CC1 - Specsavers County Championship division one, 50L - Royal London One-Day Cup, T20 - Natwest T20 Blast

Johanna's journey

Johanna Konta this week became the first British woman since Virginia Wade in 1978 to reach the Wimbledon Ladies singles semi-finals.

Here, the Sports Pink takes a closer look at Konta's journey to this point.

2002

Sydney-born Konta is scouted by respected Australian coach Pete McCraw to join an elite training squad.

2004

Tennis Australia cuts its funding and Konta is not among players given extra support.

2005

Moves to Spain to train at Barcelona's Sanchez-Casal Academy, where Andy Murray also played.

2006

Relocates to England to be closer to parents living in



Johanna Konta

Eastbourne.

2012

Granted a British passport and handed a wild card for the Wimbledon main draw but loses in the first round to Christina McHale.

2014

Begins working with Spanish coach Esteban Carril and sports psychologist Juan Coto. Briefly breaks into the world's top 100 for the first time.

2015

Enjoys breakthrough run to the fourth round at the US Open and finishes the year inside the top 50.

2016

Backs up US Open run by reaching the Australian Open semi-finals and winning first WTA title in Stanford. Climbs inside the world's top 10 and hires Wim Fissette, former coach of

HANTS CRICKET

Simon Carter

RYAN Higgins is the latest former Southern Premier League cricketer to make an impact in county cricket.

The former Bashley Rydal man produced a stunning innings for Middlesex in the county's opening T20 game of 2017 against Gloucestershire.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at those who have progressed from the SPL to the county stage.

Ryan Higgins

The Zimbabwe-born all-rounder played eight games for Bashley Rydal in the 2012 Southern Premier League.

He scored three half-centuries in seven innings, with a top score of 61 at an average of 29, and also took eight wickets at an expensive 47.00 apiece.

The following year, 2013, Higgins top scored for England U19s in a one-day tri-series against Pakistan and Bangladesh.

His best score was an unbeaten 113 against Bangladesh, and his team-mates included Hampshire wicket-keeper Lewis McManus and Northants' England international Ben Duckett.

Now 22, Higgins made his first class debut for Middlesex in last month's Championship victory over Yorkshire. He has since played two other Specsavers matches.

It was at Cheltenham last week, though, that he first hit the headlines.

Replying to Gloucestershire's 182-6 total, Middlesex were 91-5 when Higgins walked to the crease.

That soon became 119-8, and there were only 4.2 overs left.

Remarkably, Higgins reached his second T20 half-century off 23 balls and then smashed a further 18 off his last five deliveries.

Reaching an undefeated 68 off just 28 balls, Higgins could only watch as No 11 Nathan Sowter - who had helped him add 63 in 4.1 overs - was dismissed off the last ball of the innings to leave the enthralling encounter dramatically tied.

Chris Rogers

The Australian had already made his Championship debut for Derbyshire in 2004 when he arrived in Salisbury at the start of the 2005 Southern Premier League season as South Wilts' overseas player.

Big things were expected, and Rogers duly compiled 575 runs in 13 innings with six half-centu-

ries. His top score was 98 against the Hampshire Academy.

Rogers returned to the County Championship in the second half of the 2005 season, signing for Leicestershire.

He averaged over 70 and scored a remarkable double century against the touring Australians..

The following year, 2006, he signed for a third Midlands

county - Northamptonshire - and struck 319 against Gloucestershire.

In October of the same year, he compiled 279 playing for Western Australia against Victoria at the WACA. In doing so, he and one-time Hampshire batsman Marcus North put on a record domestic third wicket partnership of 459.

Rogers made his Test debut in

January 2008 against India in Perth, but was dropped after scoring 16 and four and did not appear again until the summer of 2013.

Recalled during the Ashes series in England, he scored 110 in a losing cause at Durham before starring in his country's white-wash of England Down Under in 2013/14 - scoring two centuries in the series.



HANTS CRICKET

foreign stars



Chris Rogers (main picture) acknowledges the applause of the crowd after a century for Australia. Ryan Higgins (below) and Adam Voges (left) have also played in the Southern Premier League



Rogers came of age in the 2014 series in India, where he compiled six successive Test half-centuries.

A seventh came when he scored 95 in the opening Ashes Test of 2015 in Cardiff.

After scoring just 10 in his next innings, Rogers struck an imperious 173 in Australia's 405-run win at Lord's.

The last of Rogers' 25 Tests

came at The Oval that summer, and he finished with 2,015 runs at 42.87 from his 25 Tests.

Rogers announced his retirement from the first class game after scoring 1,010 Championship runs for Somerset last season. In 313 first class games, he scored over 25,000 runs at 49.55 with 76 centuries.

He captained Middlesex in 2014,

the year he was chosen as one of Wisden's Five Cricketers of the Year for his run of Test half-centuries the year before.

Travis Head

The Australian made a big impact when he spent a season in the Southern Premier League in 2013 at Ventnor.

Then 19, he ended up as the SPL top flight's leading runscore with 733 from 14 innings at 61.08.

He struck an unbeaten 142 against Bashley Rydal on Island and made six other scores of 50 or more.

Head also struck 108 in a SPL T20 win against Hambledon and made 115 in a remarkable friendly game against tourists Cricketers' Club of New South Wales.

Head scored 115 out of Ventnor's 166 all out total. Apart from Rob Snell (27), no other Ventnor player made more than six!

The South Australian has gone on to play 25 ODIs for his country after making his debut in 2016, with a highest score of 128 against India this January.

Playing for Yorkshire against Leicester in the Royal London 50-over Cup last July, he smashed a one-day highest 175 off 139 balls at Grace Road with 18 fours and four sixes.

Luke Ronchi

The New Zealand born batsman was a smash hit with Bashley Rydal in his three seasons with the New Forest club.

In his first year, 1999, he gave glimpses of his potential - hitting 130 against OTs and Romsey and an unbeaten 83 against Calmore.

In 2000, he struck 630 SPL runs at 52.50, the fourth highest in the top flight with a top score of 120 against Bournemouth at Chapel Gate.

He also compiled an unbeaten 112 against Hungerford and 109 not out against Bournemouth.

The following year, 2002, Ronchi's 704-run haul at 54.15 was the highest in the SPL top flight.

His 144 against Calmore was the highest innings in the league that summer, while he also struck an unbeaten 126 against Burridge.

Ronchi went on to make his ODI debut and T20 international debut for Australia, prior to switching to his native country.

He ended with 85 ODI appearances for New Zealand, and 29 T20 outings for his country, in addition to winning four Test caps.

The highlight of his career was an incredible 170 not out for the Kiwis against Sri Lanka in an ODI in January 2015 - made while batting at No 7.

Coming in at 93-5, Ronchi - whose innings occupied only 99 balls and contained 14 fours and nine sixes - added an unbroken 267 with Grant Elliott.

Adam Voges

The Australian scored 512 runs at 46.54 when he spent a summer playing for Bournemouth in 2003.

He boasted a top score of 92 not out among his five half centuries.

Continued on page 30

Key times for Konta

Johanna Konta this week became Britain's first Wimbledon women's singles semi-finalist for 39 years.

Here, the Sports Pink picks out five key moments in Konta's rise.

1. Mind coach

Konta began working with mental trainer Juan Coto in October 2014 and, of all the people involved in her meteoric rise, he is probably the most important.

Konta used to struggle badly dealing with the pressure in big matches but the total transformation in her approach has sent her soaring up the rankings.

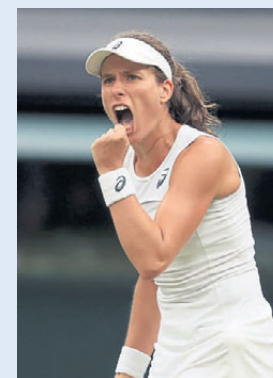
Coto tragically died last year but his influence lives on.

2. Breakthrough

Heading into the grass-court season in 2015, Konta was still ranked only just inside the top 150. But in her home town of Eastbourne she showed she could be a danger to the leading players, beating then world number eight Ekaterina Makarova and Garbine Muguruza to reach the quarter-finals.

3. Dominance

Konta lost to Maria Sharapova at Wimbledon in 2015 but the seed had been sown and she went on a 16-match winning streak on the



Johanna Konta

North American hard courts, which was only ended by Petra Kvitová in the fourth round of the US Open.

Konta beat Muguruza again and Andrea Petkovic and climbed from 126 in the rankings to 66.

4. Melbourne magic

Konta's run in New York marked her out as one to watch, and she built on that in tremendous fashion at the Australian Open in 2016.

After beating Venus Williams in round one, Konta survived a tight tussle in round four against Makarova and made it all the way to the semi-finals, the first British woman to do so in 32 years. As a result, Konta climbed into the top 30.

5. Miami victory

She continued her upward trajectory throughout 2016 and into 2017, winning her first WTA Tour title in Stanford and second in Sydney.

But it was her third title in Miami in April that really marked out Konta as a grand slam challenger in one of the most open eras in women's tennis. She defeated Halep, Venus Williams and Caroline Wozniacki to win the biggest title for a British woman since Virginia Wade's Wimbledon title in 1977.

Hamilton's highs & lows

Lewis Hamilton will celebrate the 10th anniversary of his British GP debut later this week.

Here, the Sports Pink takes a look back at the highs and lows for Hamilton on home soil.

LOWS

2009 - Hamilton won his maiden Formula One title in 2008, but his championship defence was blighted by an under-performing McLaren. Hamilton qualified a disastrous 19th after he was forced to abandon his final lap when Adrian Sutil crashed. It got little better for Hamilton during the race as he scrapped for the menial places. He finished 16th of 18 classified runners.

2013 - In his first season with Mercedes, Hamilton appeared destined to record only his second win on home soil. The British driver sealed pole position with a scintillating qualifying lap, and got the perfect getaway to leave his rivals in the shade. But on lap eight his tyre exploded, dropping him to the back of the field. He fought back to finish fourth, but his wait for a second win at Silverstone would extend into a sixth year.

HIGHS

2007 - 'Hamilton Mania' was



Lewis Hamilton

sweeping Britain with a fresh-faced 22-year-old riding the crest of a Formula One wave. Incredibly, in his rookie campaign, Hamilton led the title race heading into the ninth round at Silverstone after finishing on the podium at every round. He secured pole with a blistering lap in the dying seconds of qualifying. Hamilton failed to follow up his pole with victory, but Britain had a new motor racing and sporting star.

2008 - Hamilton headed to his home race fourth in the drivers' standings but left on top after storming to victory in one of the outstanding performances by a British driver in recent years. In torrential rain Hamilton blitzed the field, finishing the race almost 70 seconds ahead of second-placed Nick Heidfeld.

2014 - Hamilton started the 2014 race only sixth after he misjudged the damp conditions in qualifying. But the Briton, roared on by a patriotic crowd, forced his way up to second after the opening exchanges, and then to his delight, and that of the home crowd, Rosberg's gearbox expired to pave the way for Hamilton to take the chequered flag. He followed that up with victories in 2015 and last year.

HANTS CRICKET

From SPL to the

By Simon Carter

From page 29

Voges made a sensational impact when he was handed his Australian Test debut, at the age of 36, in the summer of 2015.

He scored 130 in his first innings against the West Indies in Dominica, becoming the oldest Test debut centurion in history as a result.

The following December, he embarked on a series of Bradmanesque innings.

He struck a career best 269 not out against the West Indies at Hobart, followed by an unbeaten 106 against the same opponents in Melbourne.

In his next innings, in February 2016, Voges compiled 239.

En route to his second Test double won, Voges broke the world record for the highest number of runs without a dismissal - 614, beating the previous record set by Sachin Tendulkar of 497.

When Voges reached 172, his Test average passed 100, although when he was dismissed it dropped back to 97.46. He currently averages 61.87, the second highest of any Test player in history who has completed 20 innings (behind, of course, Sir Donald Bradman).

Voges helped Middlesex win the County Championship in 2016, having first appeared for the county three years earlier. No doubt his former Bournemouth colleague - ex-Hampshire man Richard Scott - played a big part in that decision as Scott was, and remains, Middlesex's first team coach.

Glenn Maxwell

The Australian has established himself as one of the biggest hitting box office stars in international cricket since appearing for South Wilts at the start of the SPL season.

He has made 77 ODI and 31 T20 appearances for his country, and has wowed crowds all over the world.

None more so than at Pallakele last September, when he smote an unbeaten 145 off 68 balls - with 14 fours and nine sixes - in a T20 international against Sri Lanka.

That was the sort of form Maxwell hadn't shown in his eight-game SPL stint for South Wilts.

There he struck a top score of 46 on his way to a 204-run haul at 25.50. He was far more effective with the ball, a 7-33 haul helping him bag 25 wickets at 12.88.



Maxwell was an instant hit when he was called up by Hampshire for their T20 campaign in mid-summer.

The 23-year-old gave a county audience a first real glimpse of his ability in only his third game for Hampshire, belting 66 off 32

balls at Canterbury. He reached his half-century in 22 deliveries - the fastest T20 fifty for the county.

Five days later, he smashed an unbeaten 66 off 24 balls, this time reaching his half-century in 21 deliveries - beating his own county record.

These innings probably didn't surprise everyone associated with Hampshire.

After all, he had appeared for the county's 2nd XI in a T20 Cup tie against the MCC Young Cricketers at Shenley in late May.

That was the day he smote 12

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH HAMPSHIRE CRICKET AND LOCAL CRICKET IN THE DAILY ECHO

HANTS CRICKET

county stage ...



Glenn Maxwell (main picture), Ian Holland (above) and Travis Head (left).

sixes in a 44-ball 115!

Maxwell went on to make his international debut the following autumn, and has since had spells with Surrey and Yorkshire.

He also returned to Hampshire for a second stint in 2014, but could not replicate his former T20

heroics of two years earlier. He did, though, smash 145 in a Royal London Cup tie against Lancashire at Old Trafford.

Recalled to the Australian Test team in March of this year after a two-and-a-half-year absence, Maxwell scored his first Test ton - 104

against India. He has now made five Test appearances.

Chris Cooke

The South African-born wicket-keeper batsman scored 543 SPL top flight runs in 2010 during

a summer with Bournemouth. Included in that haul was an unbeaten 106 against Havant.

The same summer, in July, Cooke made 124 for Hampshire 2nds against Middlesex 2nds at Basingstoke. The following month, though, he had signed for Glamorgan and scored 112 for their 2nds.

Cooke made his T20 debut for Glamorgan the following summer, and in 2012 smashed 137 not out off 112 balls in a CB 40 tie at Taunton.

Cooke made his first class debut for Glamorgan in July 2013. He has been a regular ever since, hitting a career best 171 against Kent at Canterbury in 2014.

Ian Holland

The 26-year-old American-born Australian is the latest overseas player at South Wilts.

He has followed in Maxwell's footsteps by being picked for Hampshire not long after arriving in Salisbury.

Holland has appeared in three Championship games so far and two Royal London Cup ties.

Prior to playing for Hampshire, his only previous first class appearance was for Victoria in a Sheffield Shield tie in February 2016.

Chris Lynn

The Australian didn't play in the top flight of the Southern League when he spent a summer in Hampshire in 2008.

Indeed, he didn't even play in the second division.

No, he appeared for Gosport Borough in Division 3 - the highlight being a 108-ball 136 not out against US Portsmouth at Privett Park.

Fast forward six years and Lynn was making the first of five T20 international appearances for Australia.

In January of this year, he made his ODI debut against Pakistan in Brisbane.

Since leaving Gosport, Lynn has at T20 Big Bash hundred to his name - a 51-ball 103 for Brisbane Heat against Hobart in December 2015.

Having first played in the Indian Premier League in 2012 for Deccan, he has since appeared for Kolkata in 2014, 2016 and 2017.

Now 27, this year he scored 295 runs in seven innings at an impressive 49.16, with a top score of 93 not out against Gujarat Lions.

British GP talking points

Lewis Hamilton will arrive at the British Grand Prix 20 points behind Sebastian Vettel in the race for this year's championship.

Here, the Sports Pink takes a closer look at the major talking points ahead of the ninth round of the campaign.

HAMILTON ON HOLIDAY

Hamilton lost further ground to Vettel after he finished only fourth at last Sunday's Austrian GP. And the Briton took the peculiar step of going on a two-day holiday in between the Spielberg race and his home GP. He was the only current driver absent from the London demonstration on Wednesday - a move which has irked the sport's new owners. Hamilton's Mercedes team claim the Englishman is entitled to a break, but one wonders whether there is more to it. His timing certainly seems curious.

BRITISH GP CAST INTO DOUBT

The British GP faces being chalked off the calendar beyond 2019 after Silverstone's owners delivered the sport's worst-kept secret by activating a break clause in its contract. The British Racing Drivers' Club, which owns the Northamptonshire circuit, are hopeful they will be able to renegotiate a more financially-viable deal with Liberty Media, Formula One's new American owners. It is a



Valtteri Bottas

risky strategy.

BOTTAS ON THE MOVE

Valtteri Bottas' victory in Austria has forced Hamilton to look over his shoulder after the Finn moved to within 15 points of his Mercedes team-mate. Hamilton was expected to be the de facto number one at Mercedes this season following Nico Rosberg's shock retirement - but Bottas has recorded two victories, just one fewer than Hamilton, and out-qualified the Briton on a number of occasions, too.

ALONSO AIMING TO BOUNCE BACK

Fernando Alonso is hopeful he will bounce back from another torrid weekend in Austria. The double world champion was punted out of the Spielberg race on the first lap following an over-exuberant move by Daniil Kvyat at turn one. Alonso, who will determine his future during the summer break, has failed to finish six of the eight races he has competed in this year.

CHANGES AT SAUBER

Former Renault chief Frederic Vasseur has been handed the reins at Sauber after he was announced as Monisha Kaltenborn's replacement on Wednesday. Frenchman Vasseur parted company with Renault after just one lacklustre season, but has been deemed as the right person to turn Sauber's fortunes around. The Swiss outfit are last but one in the constructors' championship having scored only five points this season.

GOT A CRICKET STORY FOR US? EMAIL ECHOSPORT@DAILYECHO.CO.UK

LOCAL CRICKET



Young guns boost Wilts

For decades now, South Wilts can be justly proud of their outstanding record in producing home grown talent, a conveyor belt of youngsters making their way into and establishing themselves in Southern Premier League cricket.

James Hibberd's side which beat Lyminster and went to the top of the Premier League contained no less than EIGHT home grown players and was the youngest first team ever fielded, beating the previous record – set up a week earlier!

The average age of the side was just over 22, with Jack Mynott being the third eldest behind skipper Hibberd (36) and James Hayward (30).

Of the winning side at Lyminster, only Hibberd, Luke Evans and Ryan Murray were not locally cultivated cricketers.

Those youngsters have made their mark this season, with Will Wade and Ben Draper scoring centuries and pace bowler Luke Evans underlining his potential with a spate of wickets.

Others are making positive



Ben Draper.

contributions towards the team's success, with 19-year old Draper also taking over the wicket-keeping role.

"Ben's recent century against St Cross was as good as I've seen from a young cricketer," praised Hibberd.

"His father Paul was a quality player but in a very different way.

"Ben plays the short ball and deals with spin very well, which was apparent against St Cross.

"He's always been handy with the gloves and played his youth cricket as a keeper. His emergence has enabled Sam Pittman to drop down to the seconds and play an important role as they have a battle for survival on their hands."

Four straight wins has propelled South Wilts from mid-table to top.

"We're happy to be where we are, just enjoying our cricket. No one's talking about winning leagues. There's two months cricket left," warned skipper James Hibberd.

"The great thing about it all is that the lads are all maturing together and all contributing."

South Wilts fielded four sides in Premier and Hampshire League cricket last weekend and 33 of the 44 players on parade were Bemerton raised.

Langley buzzing after hitting purple patch



Langley Manor. Standing (from left): Chris Thomason, James Purnell, Ben Morgan, Luke Mooney, Steve Harris, Conor Brown. Front: Tom Spencer, Saulieg Rayned, Jack Budd, Ollie Knight, Nick Wheeler.

Promoted Langley Manor are buzzing after five wins in their last six Southern Premier League Division 2 games, which include victories over promotion chasing pair Hartley Wintney and Totton & Eling.

It's a stark contrast to their early season form when three straight defeats tinged the euphoria of winning the Third Division title

in some style.

But once they regained the winning formula, only Trojans have blocked their way and a comfortable mid-table finish (perhaps even higher) awaits.

So far, South African Sauleg Reyned has made 277 runs, teenage Tommy Spencer taking 17 wickets – and Nick Wheeler than

amazing 8-20 return against South Wilts II last month.

The Manor drove a spoke into Totton & Eling's promotion prospects with a 31-run derby win at Southern Gardens.

Langley were mauled by eight wickets by Totton on the opening day but they defended 209 and restricted Totton to 178-8.



Lyminster's brand new clubhouse and pavilion, which will serve both the town's cricket and football clubs, is now fully functional, with licensed bar and kitchen facilities complementing new changing facilities and a pleasant cricket viewing area.

LOCAL CRICKET



All-rounder Steve stars for OTs & Romsey

OTs & Romsey moved into fifth spot in the Hampshire Cricket League top flight after beating New Milton II by five wickets.

But they will want to eradicate the 49 extras (33 wides) they conceded and which, but for Steve Watts' 55, would have top scored in Milton's 208.

Steve Smith had a splendid match for OTR, taking 4-32 before scoring 55 as his side chased down the target - Gus Flack (45) and Colin Morris (38) also playing a major role.

An unbroken match winning stand of 126 between man-of-the-match Hakin Peruzi and Kiwi Tarin Mason hauled Hythe & Dibden out of the mire and set up a five-wicket win over Ventnor II at Steephill.

Hythe, who have beaten several other clubs to the signature of former Bath ace Zach Millar, were on the run at 85-5 when the pair came together.

But they turned the tide in style, with Peruzi hitting 89 not out (having earlier taken 3-25) and Mason an unbeaten 42.

Desperate

Martin Blackman (88) rescued Ventnor II from a desperate 85-7 and helped the hosts to 208.

United Services remain in serious relegation trouble after Bishops Waltham inflicted their eighth defeat in nine outings.

Only Sarisbury Athletic, beaten by six wickets by St Cross Symondians III, and Rowledge II lie beneath them in the log.

US crashed to 22-4 and later 59-5 replying to Waltham's 249-7, leaving Gary Hounsborne (68), Matt Easton (38) and the bottom order far too much to do. They were 213 all out.

Earlier, Dom Quincey (65) and Phil Baldock (44) guided BW to 132-2 but a middle-order wobble needed a repair job from Sam Medhurst (42) and Harry Barrett (32).

Tom Fay (61) top scored as St Cross chased down Sarisbury Athletic's 204 (Chris Mottola 47), while Buridge lifted themselves out of immediate trouble with a six-wicket win over seemingly doomed Rowledge.

Great week for George

It's been quite a week for George Metzger, the young Basingstoke & North Hants wicketkeeper.

His maiden Premier Division century coincided with his selection for the South & West team to play in next week's English Schools' CA Bunbury Under-15 Festival at Stowe School.

Unable to make Basingstoke's trip to Ventnor, Metzger instead played for the Hampshire Academy and notched a debut making 109 in the 164-run thrashing of New Milton.

Metzger will be joined at the Bunbury Festival by Fletcha Middleton (who won the batting prize at last year's tournament) and left-arm all-rounder Tom South.

● Tichborne Park will play Alton-based



George Metzger

Rotherfield Park in the Winchester & District CA's Tichborne Trophy final at Hursley Park on Thursday evening July 27.

In the semi-finals, Tichborne (163-7) held off Longparish to win by eight runs, while Michael Heffernan hit a half-century as Rotherfield Park cruised to a six-wicket win at Easton & Martyr Worthy.

Semi-final scores:
Tichborne Park 163/7 (Ryan Brooks 47, Ed Berry 27) beat Longparish 155/5 (W Samways 53*, M Taplin 41) by eight runs
Rotherfield Park 107-4 (Mike Heffernan 50*) beat Easton & MW (Ian Stuart 27*, Dan Scott 3-13, Andy Tapp 2-19) by six wickets.

The Igglesden Trophy final, also at The Quarters, will be between Hursley Park and Wickham.

Semi-final scores:
Hursley Park 130-1 (J Gilbert 50*, J Theobald 34) beat Willow Tree 129-8 (K Neave 36, S Berryman 29, B Chappungu 4-29) by nine wickets
Wickham 63-1 beat Fair Oak 62 all out (Chris Martin 3-2, Alex Reidy 3-20) by 9 wickets

Lofty Ryde suffer high-scoring blip

Mike Vimpany



Ryde and Portsmouth & Southsea share the Hampshire League, County Division One leadership with 197 points each going into today's round 11 matches.

Pre-season favourites P & S took advantage of Ryde's unexpected high scoring blip against Hook & Newnham Basics to move joint top.

Ryde were optimistic about nailing a ninth win in ten when Josh Procter, with a fiery 68 (three sixes and ten fours) off 49 balls and Ben Wadmore (67) eased them to 278-9.

But Hook gave chase and on the back of knocks by teenager Liam Doran (70) pictured, Ben Allnutt (53) and Harry Warner (39) got in by three wickets with ten balls to spare.

Portsmouth & Southsea, whose August 5 showdown with Ryde could decide the title, trimmed fading Ropley by 71 runs.

They were in the driving seat once they posted 265-8 (Steve Clements 60) and once Kieron Dunstan (4-41) had removed four of Ropley's top six, the outcome was virtually assured.

Ropley, now in sixth spot, were dismissed of 194.

Longparish, who also have Ryde on their upcoming fixture list, brushed aside Fareham & Crofton, whose Australian teen all-rounder Reece Abrams is sidelined with a broken hand.

Much hinged on Tom Kent (26) for Fareham, but once he went the innings folded to 147 all out, with James Bevan and Harry Martin



Hook batsman Liam Doran, left, and Steve Smith, who starred for OTs & Romsey (see story at top of page).



sharing six of the scalps.

Will de Cani's unbeaten 67 saw Longparish home - something that Fareham also achieved, having got lost and ended up at Fleet

on their way back!

Shrewton are languishing in the bottom half of CD1, but they are always liable to produce a surprise result - as both Longparish

and Lymington II have found in recent weeks.

They crushed fourth placed Lymington by eight wickets, chasing down 201.

Antonio - the background

Germany defender Antonio Rudiger has joined Chelsea from Roma on a five-year contract. Here, the Sports Pink picks out five things you may not know about the 24-year-old.

WEAH JERSEY

Rudiger's first football shirt was self-made and was designed to resemble the one worn by George Weah, the AC Milan and Liberia striker. Weah spent the second half of the 1999-2000 season on loan at Chelsea, scoring five goals in 15 appearances.

RONALDO ADMIRER

The first player Rudiger really idolised was Ronaldo, the Brazil striker. Rudiger says on his website: "He was the perfect striker and he had everything." He began his career as a forward, before later switching to defence.

STREET SOCCER

Rudiger began playing football on the streets of Berlin. He says the game



James Ward-Prowse (left) shakes hands with Antonio Rudiger after the International friendly in Dortmund earlier this year.

allowed him to channel his talent and saw him focus on what he could achieve in life. He joined Borussia Dortmund's academy before coming to prominence with Stuttgart.

GUNNERS FAN?

Rudiger has risked the wrath of Chelsea fans with a 2014 interview in which he said he has been following Arsenal since the days of Thierry Henry and Dennis Bergkamp.

SAY NO TO SENAD

Rudiger is sadly among the black professionals to have experienced racism during his time in Italy, but notably it was from a fellow player. After last December's Rome derby, Senad Lulic tried to belittle Rudiger by comparing him to a street vendor, saying he had just been "selling socks and belts" in Stuttgart before joining Roma. Lulic was banned for 20 days.

CHERRIES

Stealing march

Paul
McNamara

CHERRIES are the seventh highest spending club in English football this year.

That fact alone is instructive on two counts.

Firstly, their readiness to stump up the cash necessary to land their prime targets is indicative of a club unashamedly ramping up its ambitions.

More than that though, Cherries' current position at the top table, shooting the breeze with the other high rollers, speaks of a job well done.

Their lofty spot in this rather gaudy list will, indubitably, prove to be an ephemeral state of affairs.

Only Everton, Manchester United, Manchester City, Arsenal, Liverpool and Leicester have shelled out more dough than Cherries in 2017.

But with the likes of Chelsea, Tottenham and West Ham – not to mention Stoke, Newcastle, West Brom and the rest – still girding their respective loins prior to inevitable splurges, Cherries can expect to be lapped in this particular field by the time summer is out.

Indeed, it is not beyond the realms of possibility that, come August 31, Everton – current outlay £123million – will look positively frugal.

The £31million Cherries have spent, though, trails in importance to the timing of their most recent deals. Asmir Begovic, Jermain Defoe and Nathan Ake were all on board for this week's training camp in Marbella.

Premium

Managers place an enormous premium on having all their ducks in a row ahead of pre-season training. As such, Eddie Howe has got a jump on the rest of the Premier League – Everton and, perhaps, Manchester City, aside.

It is not overstating things to suggest that the benefits of conducting slick summer business, while rivals are dithering, can potentially endure deep into the ensuing campaign.

Jose Mourinho credits the twin capture of Cesc Fabregas and Diego Costa far in advance of 2014-15 as being pivotal to Chelsea winning that season's title.

Equally, Hull City were chasing their tails last term from the moment they flew to a pre-season camp in Austria with nine first-team players.

Their subsequent August dead-



New Cherries signings Nathan Ake, Jermain Defoe (top right) and Asmir Begovic (bottom right).

line dash did little to repair matters. And by the time new boss Marco Silva went into recruitment overdrive in January, the damage had already been done.

The nine days Howe and his players have been spending in southern Spain could shape the next months ahead.

Long gone are the days when pre-season was all about running the legs off players who had spent their downtime imbibing and

feasting like kings.

It is an exact science today, all structured individual programmes and tactical plans drilled to the nth degree.

Nathan Ake will know what to expect. The price Cherries paid for the Dutchman seemed to knock some noses out of joint in certain quarters.

One suspects the same people sniping about an "inflated" fee for a defender with little Premier

League experience, would be sagely praising an "astute" piece of business if the Holland international had signed for Liverpool or Spurs, rather than little old Cherries.

Ake gave us a glimpse of what he will bring to the party during six months with Cherries last season.

What stood out above all else was his almost freaky composure. A lot is made of Cherries' unique



CHERRIES



on their rivals?



way of playing – and the demands it places on the players: it takes some getting used to.

But on his first top-flight start for the team at Stoke, Ake looked as if he had been part of the furniture for years.

Sparingly used

Similarly, on his return to Chelsea, Ake was sparingly used. He

did, though, play 120 minutes as part of a back three as Antonio Conte's side beat Spurs 4-2 in an FA Cup semi-final at Wembley. And he did it with the proverbial cigar on.

Ake brings class on the ball, versatility and underrated defensive quality. He's a thoroughly nice chap, too, which goes a long way at Dean Court.

Back to that £20million price tag for a moment. The player is 22

years old. Imagine what he'll be worth after two or three years of working under Howe.

Goalkeeper Begovic has been in the same boat as Ake at Stamford Bridge. At first glance, his decision two years ago to relinquish the gloves at Stoke in favour of a fight for action with Chelsea looked rather odd.

This, though, is a man who left home in Canada to sign for Portsmouth when he was 16. Begovic

trawled around various outposts on loan – La Louviere in Belgium, Yeovil, Ipswich and then League One Cherries – as he sought to find his place in the game.

The opportunity to sign for one of Europe's foremost clubs, then, must have been irresistible for the Bosnian.

Nevertheless, Begovic played only two Premier League matches last term. He will surely be straining at the leash, which can only

Lukaku sets new record

Manchester United have signed Everton striker Romelu Lukaku in a deal which could be worth a potential world-record £90m, with a £75m fee supplemented by add-ons. Here we look at the Old Trafford club's biggest buys and sales to date.

PAUL POGBA

(From Juventus, £89m, 2016)
A world-record deal took the France international back to his former club but he is yet to reproduce the form he showed at Juventus.

CRISTIANO RONALDO

(To Real Madrid, £80m, 2009)
Ronaldo's sale to Real smashed the transfer record eight years ago. However, with Ronaldo having helped the Spaniards win the Champions League three times and two league titles – in addition to millions of shirt sales – Real more than got their money's worth.

ANGEL DI MARIA

(From Real Madrid, £59.7m, 2014)
A British-record transfer at the time, as United backed new manager Louis van Gaal with cash, but the Argentina international failed to live up to lofty expectations.

ANTHONY MARTIAL



Romelu Lukaku

(From Monaco, £58.8m, 2015)
Full amount will only be due if all add-ons above the initial £36m up-front fee are met but that did not stop then manager Van Gaal describing the sum as "ridiculous". Martial made an immediate impact, finishing his first season as top scorer, but has since slipped down the pecking order under Jose Mourinho.

ANGEL DI MARIA

(To Paris St Germain, £44.3m 2015)

Just a year after joining Di Maria was on his way as a promising start to his Old Trafford career faltered to the extent he did not start a game between early March and the final match of the season, in which he got injured.

JUAN MATA

(From Chelsea, £37.1m, 2014)

The Spain international was a January arrival signed to boost a struggling David Moyes in his maiden season in charge, having succeeded Sir Alex Ferguson. Has proved to be a successful buy.

DIMITAR BERBATOV

(From Tottenham, £30.75m, 2008)
Scored 56 goals in 149 appearances but had an up-and-down time at Old Trafford, winning the league twice.

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Photos by Stuart Martin



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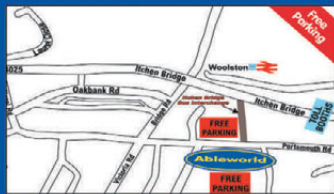
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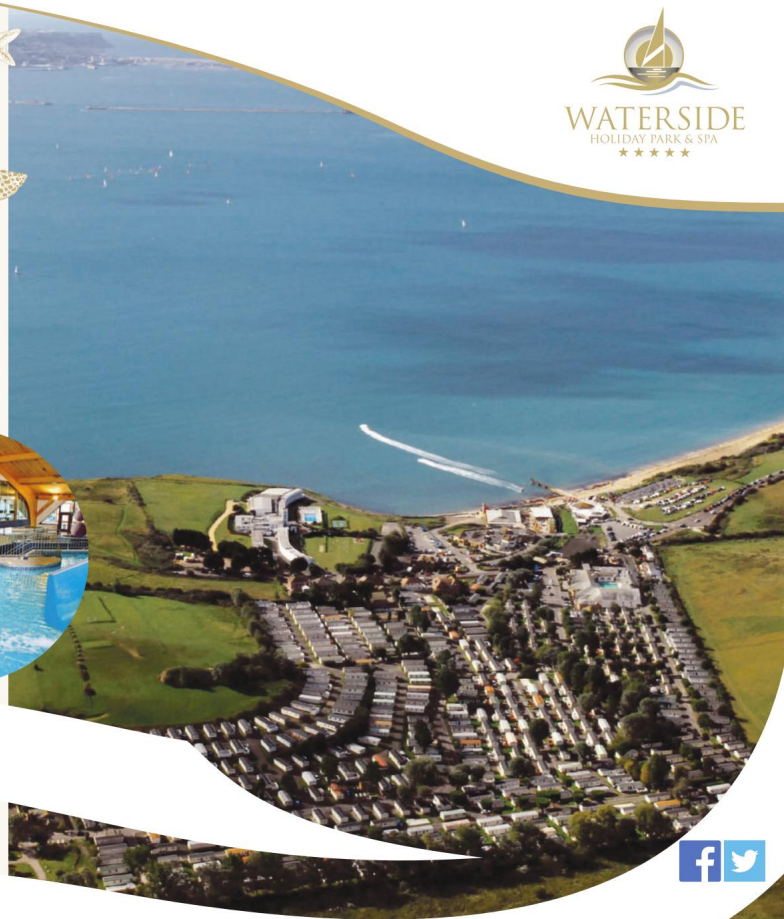
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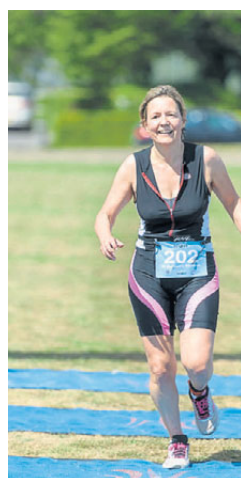
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1. Ben Saunders	(30-34)	00:59:19
2. Matt Keogh	(20-24)	01:02:11
3. Mac Costley	(20-24)	01:04:47
4. Toby Leyland	(40-44)	01:05:48
5. Gavin Watts	(35-39)	01:05:53
6. George Little	(35-39)	01:06:42
7. Michael Warner	(40-44)	01:06:47
8. Wayne Ewens	(35-39)	01:06:52
9. Michael Turner	(55-59)	01:06:58
10. Stuart Seymour	(35-39)	01:07:46
11. Tony Hughes	(45-49)	01:07:49
12. Duncan Berry	(40-44)	01:07:52
13. Mark Johnson	(45-49)	01:08:34
14. Chris Sully	(25-29)	01:08:56
15. Antoine Marcade	(35-39)	01:09:35
16. Ian Feltham	(30-34)	01:09:41
17. Ruan Simpson	(30-34)	01:09:46
18. Phil Gough	(25-29)	01:09:47
19. Stuart Smith	(40-44)	01:10:51
20. Adam Isaac	(35-39)	01:11:09
21. Tom Heycock	(25-29)	01:11:26
22. Tom Houseman	(25-29)	01:11:56
23. Jonathon Miller	(17-18)	01:11:56
24. Daniel Landi	(30-34)	01:12:10
25. Matt Oxley	(40-44)	01:12:10
26. Derek Hearn	(40-44)	01:12:13
27. Rhiannon Perryment	(45-49)	01:12:15
28. Mark Feltham	(30-34)	01:12:29
29. Robert Walker	(40-44)	01:13:25
30. Keith Irvine	(50-54)	01:13:49
31. C Chester	(50-54)	01:14:36
32. Mark Poole	(50-54)	01:14:36
33. Penny Rattray	(35-39)	01:14:37
34. Matthew Prescott	(30-34)	01:14:53
35. Liz Pudney	(45-49)	01:15:02
36. Charlotte Steinbrecher	(25-29)	01:15:15
37. Karen Rushton	(45-49)	01:15:18
38. Ian Grasmeyer	(40-44)	01:15:25
39. Daniel Goddard	(35-39)	01:15:39
40. Matt Peerless	(30-34)	01:15:52
41. Richard Healy	(30-34)	01:16:08
42. Sonia Rushby	(40-44)	01:16:14
43. Sarah Stuart	(40-44)	01:16:19
44. Paul Weston	(50-54)	01:16:22
45. Chris Adams	(40-44)	01:16:27
46. Kelly Thomas	(30-34)	01:16:31
47. James Crook	(35-39)	01:16:40
48. Louise Green	(35-39)	01:16:52
49. Nick Armstrong	(20-24)	01:17:07
50. Tom Watson	(40-44)	01:17:40
51. Will Campbell	(30-34)	01:18:04
52. Richard Price	(40-44)	01:18:20
53. Katie Whitmill	(40-44)	01:18:20
54. Lucy Anderson	(20-24)	01:18:25
55. Daniel Melish	(25-29)	01:18:27
56. Sergio Lopez		
De Bustos	(35-39)	01:18:42
57. Anthony Hope	(40-44)	01:18:44
58. Audley Fraser	(35-39)	01:18:45
59. Miriam McNea	(25-29)	01:18:59
60. Benedict Gardner	(19)	01:19:15
61. Caspar Fox	(40-44)	01:19:22
62. Kirsty Cartwright	(45-49)	01:19:31
63. Jane Gandee	(45-49)	01:19:37
64. Tom Nickleson	(45-49)	01:19:53
65. Nick Walmsley	(40-44)	01:19:59
66. Michael Peacock	(40-44)	01:20:22
67. Mike Adcock	(55-59)	01:20:38
68. Ally Stout	(40-44)	01:20:47
69. Tasha Hall	(30-34)	01:21:00
70. Andy Underwood	(30-34)	01:21:09
71. Sarah Shedden	(40-44)	01:21:21
72. Giles Hawke	(45-49)	01:21:22
73. Jonathon Keogh	(17-18)	01:21:23
74. Sam McGuigan	(40-44)	01:21:26
75. John Atkinson	(45-49)	01:21:27
76. Stephanie Pervin	(30-34)	01:21:27
77. Ben Simpson	(20-24)	01:21:35
78. Jessica Lowe	(25-29)	01:21:46
79. Sarah Walker	(45-49)	01:21:54
80. Wayne Dunford	(40-44)	01:21:54
81. Jason Harvey	(45-49)	01:21:58
82. Simon Buckenham	(45-49)	01:22:01
83. Matthew Watling	(20-24)	01:22:08
84. Paul Underwood	(35-39)	01:22:09
85. Becky Sutton	(35-39)	01:22:20
86. Gary Carruthers	(35-39)	01:22:26
87. Tom Mercer	(30-34)	01:22:43
88. Elliot Day	(35-39)	01:22:45
89. Martin Hopkinson	(55-59)	01:22:54
90. Chris Hanley	(30-34)	01:23:01
91. Ellie Dunn	(25-29)	01:23:02
92. Richard Marchmont	(40-44)	01:23:05
93. Robin Harford	(45-49)	01:23:16
94. Al Hall	(50-54)	01:23:39
95. Anna Lea	(45-49)	01:23:44
96. Rachael Williams	(45-49)	01:24:07
97. Mike Hurst	(25-29)	01:24:07
98. Abi Hawke	(40-44)	01:24:27
99. William Rivenberg	(35-39)	01:24:34
100. Jane Hall	(45-49)	01:24:36

PINK

Book review

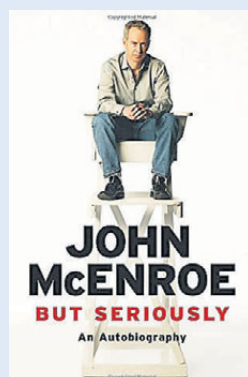
But Seriously
An Autobiography
By John McEnroe

Sportsbookofthemonth.com
price: £9.50 saving £ 10.50 on rrp

While John McEnroe was winning the US Open in 1979, your correspondent was working in New York, oblivious (as was everyone else) to the verbal assault the American would shortly launch on Wimbledon's well-tended grass courts.

Hailed as a phenomenon following that 1979 victory (he was only 20 when he became US champion), great things were expected of this native New Yorker when he left for the UK.

His army of American fans knew he was fiery, yet when Mac the Mouth let loose at umpires in SW19, regularly smashing his racquets in remarkable, never-before-seen acts of petulance, most Americans were deeply embarrassed. McEnroe might have been young, but he failed to project the image of America his countrymen insisted upon



whenever their sporting stars performed overseas. His childish behaviour alienated a sizeable number of his compatriots. In 1981, the New York Times famously referred to McEnroe as a spoilt brat and the label stuck, this time on both sides of the Atlantic.

John McEnroe was a very good tennis player, but it's pushing it to call him a great; it's certainly questionable whether he justifies a second ghosted 'autobiography', although commercial considerations will have played a major part in the decision to publish.

After all, he's a tennis commentator who collects art and knocks around with pop stars, but beyond that there's little here to set the pulse racing.

Indeed, the calibre of some of the writing and editing leaves much to be desired. What might be called the over-use of adjectives and adverbs favoured by teenagers ('awesome', 'crazy', 'incredible and so on) become a little tiresome; let's not forget that McEnroe is pushing sixty.

Nevertheless, McEnroe will pick up his fee because the book has been published, though one wonders whether the publishers will make any money from physical sales. It seems doubtful.

Wayne Rooney - his career in numbers ...

Manchester United striker Wayne Rooney has rejoined his boyhood club Everton.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at the 31-year-old England international's career in numbers.

559 - Number of appearances across all competitions Rooney made in a United shirt across his 13 seasons with the club.

253 - Number of times he scored for the Red Devils, making him the club's all-time leading goalscorer.

119 - Appearances for England, making him the Three

Lions' most capped outfield player of all time.

71 - Number of league and cup games Rooney played for the Toffees prior to his move to Old Trafford, in which time he managed to score 15 goals.

53 - International goals, making him the top-scoring England player of all time.

27 - The highest tally of goals scored by Rooney in a single Premier League season (2011-12) and also the number of penalties he converted for the Manchester giants.

16 - Rooney was 16 years and 360 days old when he netted his first Premier League goal in October 2002 to help Everton beat Arsenal, making him the youngest Premier League goalscorer at the time.

12 - Number of major honours he won with the Red Devils (five Premier League titles, three League Cups, one FA Cup, one Champions League title, one Europa League win and one FIFA Club World Cup)

9 - Number of spot-kicks Rooney failed to convert for United. Despite those misses, his side went onto win all

Muller v Nadal
joins list of epics

Rafael Nadal lost a classic Wimbledon match this week as Luxembourg's Gilles Muller upset the Spaniard in the fourth round.

It went deep into a fifth set, which Muller won 15-13, and the match lasted an extraordinary four hours and 48 minutes - matching the duration of the 2008 final when Nadal beat Roger Federer.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at other epic men's singles clashes at the All England Club.

2010

John Isner beat Nicolas Mahut
6-4 3-6 6-7 7-6 70-68

The standard by which epics in tennis are judged, and probably always will be. The statistics are incredible. The first-round match was played over three days and took 11 hours and five minutes to complete. Isner served 113 aces, and Mahut managed 103. The fifth set alone was longer than any other match in history. A plaque was erected on Court 18 to commemorate the match and the two men have become firm friends.

2008

Rafael Nadal beat Roger Federer
6-4 6-4 6-7 6-7 9-7

The 2008 final is regarded as possibly the best of all time. Federer recovered from two sets to love down, saving two match points in the fourth-set tie-break. But Nadal proved the stronger in the fifth set, clinching his first Wimbledon title in near darkness after four hours and 48 minutes - the longest final in Wimbledon history.

2009

Roger Federer beat Andy Roddick
5-7 7-6 7-6 3-6 16-14

The men's final a year later could not quite rival 2008 for sheer quality but it was a riveting contest with an extraordinary fifth set. Roddick was bidding for a first Wimbledon title having twice lost finals to Federer and he did not lose his serve un-



Gilles Muller

til the 77th and last game of the 2009 showpiece. Federer's victory meant he became the first and so far only man to win 15 grand slam singles titles.

1980

Bjorn Borg beat John McEnroe
1-6 7-5 6-3 6-7 8-6

Another epic final and the match held up alongside the 2008 showdown as the greatest in Wim-

bledon history.

The match is remembered most for the fourth-set tie-break, in which McEnroe saved five match points before eventually winning it 18-16. But Borg had the last laugh to win his fifth successive Wimbledon title.

1969

Pancho Gonzales beat Charlie Pasarell
22-24 1-6 16-14 6-3 11-9

Before Isner-Mahut, this was the definition of the Wimbledon epic. It was also a first-round match and lasted five hours and 12 minutes over two days.

Gonzales, who was 41, ended the first day two sets down but turned things around impressively, saving seven match points before clinching victory. He went on to win two more rounds before losing to Arthur Ashe.

PINK

Women's Euro Championship numbers



Mark Sampson

Germany will be defending their title at the women's European Championship when it starts on Monday.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at the key numbers and statistics involved in the tournament:

4

There are four survivors of England's 2005 European Championship squad in this year's 23-woman Lionesses party: Alex Scott, Fara Williams, Karen Carney and Casey Stoney.

16

his is the first 16-team women's European Championship. The tournament was a 12-team event for its last two editions, and as recently as 1995 was just a four-team competition.

8,000,000

Prize-money in euros on offer at the tournament, with 1.2million going to the winners.

25

When England play Scotland in

Utrecht on July 19, it will be the 25th senior international between the teams. England have won 21 of the previous 24 clashes.

121

Scotland will be missing 121 caps of top-class experience after star player Kim Little was cruelly ruled out of the tournament by injury.

53

Welshman Mark Sampson has taken charge of 53 England matches since his appointment in December 2013.

Just how far can England go ...?

England and Scotland are targeting success at the women's European Championship.

Mark Sampson's England are aiming to improve on their dismal group-stage exit four years ago, while Anna Signeul's Scotland are competing in a major final for the first time.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at a number of key questions surrounding the tournament in Holland:

England finished as Europe's top team at the World Cup, so they're favourites, right?

Steady on. It was a monumental achievement by the Lionesses two years ago in Canada, and their optimism this time is unshakeable. But England have not necessarily kicked on since the World Cup, and they lost to European heavyweights Germany and France at the SheBelieves Cup in the United States at the start of this year, albeit narrowly on both occasions. Sampson's side beat world champions USA at the same tournament, showing they can rise to the big occasion, but they will need to do that consistently to return in glory.

And are Scotland just pleased to be in the Netherlands?

Make no mistake, they're delighted to be there. But to suggest their ambitions have been fulfilled is to underestimate their appetite for the challenge. And what better way to start than with the clash against England in Utrecht



Jen Beattie in action for Scotland.

in their opening game. Midfielder Jo Love said of that game: "We'd like to think that we're going to go there and put on an amazing performance." The Scots have suffered hefty blows to their plans though, with their world-class midfielder Kim Little ruled out, followed just before the squad an-

nouncement by Manchester City defender Jen Beattie. Their squad may be weakened, but their resolve is not.

Does anyone even watch women's football?

Holland, the hosts, will be playing in front of packed stadiums for each of their group games, with all tickets sold out. The England-Scotland game will attract a big travelling support, and Channel 4 secured the UK television rights last autumn for the tournament. For the 2015 World Cup, the BBC TV coverage drew over 12 million viewers - many waiting up until the middle of the night to watch England in action. With Euro 2017 games falling in prime-time slots, more spectacular figures are expected.

So, who carries off the trophy?

Germany have landed seven of the eight titles since, in 1990, the competition known as the UEFA European Competition for Representative Women's Teams was astutely redesignated as the UEFA European Women's Championship. Perhaps look past them at your peril.

Nobody else comes into it?

Well, Lyon are the Champions League holders and the France squad features a host of their top names, including the excellent Eugénie Le Sommer, suggesting Les Bleues are in with a strong shot. And England should avoid group-stage humiliation this time. If they also avoid injuries and the disharmony that marred their last Euros campaign, Sampson and co could yet be walking tall come the final in Enschede on August 6.

Guide to the Women's Euro finals

Holland is preparing to stage the Women's European Championship, with England and Scotland both involved.

Here is a look at the tournament, which runs from July 16 to August 6:

TEAMS

This year's tournament features an expanded 16-team format, with more countries involved than ever before. Twelve teams contested the 2009 and 2013 editions.

Two teams progress to the quarter-finals from each first-round group, which line up as follows:
Group A: Holland (hosts), Norway, Denmark, Belgium
Group B: Germany (holders), Sweden, Italy, Russia
Group C: France, Iceland, Austria, Switzerland
Group D: England, Scotland, Spain, Portugal

VENUES

The matches take place at seven stadiums in seven cities: Tilburg (Koning Willem II stadion), Breda (Rat Verlegh stadion), Utrecht (De Galgenwaard), Rotterdam (Sparta stadion), Deventer (De Adelaarshorst), Doetinchem (De Vijverberg), Enschede (FC Twente stadion).

WHO'S NEW

Five countries make their debut at this level: Scotland, Belgium, Austria, Portugal and Switzerland.

THE MONEY

The 2013 finals in Sweden offered total prize-money of 2.2 million euros (£1.95m) but that rises sharply to eight million euros (£7m) for this tournament. UEFA announced the champions will collect 1.2 million euros (£1.05m), with rewards sliding to 300,000 euros (£265,000) for teams eliminated in the group stage.

THE MASCOT

The furry mascot is a cat called Kicky. Kicky is said by organisers to be a girl cat, whose boyfriend is the men's national team's mascot Dutchy. With a winning perma-grin, her multi-coloured shirt is intended to signal neutrality - but those orange trousers are a giveaway.

THE FINAL VENUE

Enschede's FC Twente stadium is better known to many as De Grolsch Veste (The Grolsch Fortress), due to a sponsorship deal with the local brewer. In 2011 tragedy struck during the redevelopment of the stadium as a roof collapsed, killing two construction workers and injuring many more. The stadium seats 30,000 spectators.

HOW DO I FOLLOW THE ACTION?

Channel 4 bought up the TV rights last autumn and will be showing matches involving England and Scotland.

The tournament's official Twitter handle is @UEFAWomensEURO and its recommended hashtag is #WEURO2017.

The England team's new handle is @Lionesses and news from the Scottish camp can be found at @ScottishFA.

PINK

The Lions tour ratings

The British and Irish Lions' tour of New Zealand ended in a drawn Test series as the curtain came down at Eden Park with a gripping finale.

Here, Andrew Baldock assesses the performances of head coach Warren Gatland's original 41-man squad selection.

LIAM WILLIAMS: Created one of the greatest tries in Lions history when he attacked from deep in the first Test. He also made mistakes, but he is a thrilling counter-attacker. 7 / 10

LEIGH HALFPENNY: Unlike in Australia four years ago, was more of a bit-part player this time round. Did not start a Test. 6

STUART HOGG: The Scotsman's tour was ended when he suffered a freak injury during the Crusaders game when team-mate Conor Murray's elbow caught him in the face. 6

ANTHONY WATSON: A wonderfully-elusive runner who was a handful for the New Zealand defence in all three Tests. Exciting to watch. 8

ELLIOT DALY: Enhanced his reputation by breaking into the Test team and starting all three All Blacks clashes. Also kicked a brilliant long-range penalty in the decider. 8

JACK NOWELL: Started the tour slowly, but he had his moments as it progressed. On the bench for second and third Tests. 6

GEORGE NORTH: Failed to make a mark and fell well below the blistering standards of his Lions tour to Australia four years ago. 5

TOMMY SEYMOUR: The Scotland wing showed his try-scoring prowess as a midweek team regular. 6

JARED PAYNE: Hampered by injury and then migraine trouble, meaning he was never able to hit top gear. 6

JONATHAN DAVIES: A magnificent tour in attack and defence. Won the Lions players' player award, and impossible to disagree. Outstanding. 9

JONATHAN JOSEPH: Could not hit the heights that he regularly manages with England. Some strong attacking moments, but also exposed in defence at times. 5

BEN TE'O: The powerful centre did a brilliant job on New Zealand dangerman Sonny Bill Williams in the first Test. Relished the big occasion. 8

ROBBIE HENSHAW: Travelled to New Zealand with his expectation, but things did not materialise, and then he suffered a tour-ending injury in the Hurricanes game. 5

OWEN FARRELL: Won the second Test and drew the third with his nerveless penalty kicking. Rock-solid temperament, although sometimes prone to making wrong decisions. 7

JOHNNY SEXTON: The Ireland fly-half worked well with Farrell at inside centre, and gave the Lions options with his game-management skills. 7

DAN BIGGAR: Had to settle for a midweek team role, but the Wales number 10 never let his head drop and provided a strong presence throughout. 7

Continued on facing page

How previous Lions draws affected a series

The British and Irish Lions shared their three-Test series against New Zealand 1-1 after their first drawn Test in 33 years.

It is the 10th draw in Lions Test history and here, the Sports Pink looks back at the previous post-war ones and how each one left the series.

1974 - South Africa 13 Lions 13, fourth Test

The Lions' "Invincibles" were already 3-0 up in the four-Test series but were denied a perfect 22 out of 22 wins on the tour. Indeed, they needed a 76th-minute penalty from Andy Irvine to preserve their unbeaten record.

1971 - New Zealand 14 Lions 14, fourth Test

Still the only time the Lions have won a series in New Zealand, recovering from a 22-12 defeat in the second Test to win the third and close out a 2-1 win with a hard-fought draw in the series finale. JPR Williams' drop goal proved crucial as the tourists held firm to seal a historic triumph.

1968 - South Africa 6 Lions 6, second Test

Draws may be rare these days but they were commonplace in this previous era, occurring in three successive series. The Lions lost their 1968 series in South Africa 3-0 with only the second Test bringing any consolation, courtesy of two penalties from Ireland full-back Tom Kiernan.

1962 - South Africa 3 Lions 3, first Test

One try apiece - in those days worth only three points - left the first Test tied at Ellis Park, Welshman Ken Jones racing 60 metres for the Lions to cancel out a score from fellow centre Johnny Gainsford. That was as good as it got, though, with the hosts then winning two tight Tests and comfortably taking the last for a 3-0 series win.

1950 - New Zealand 9 Lions 9, first Test

The first tour to officially use the Lions name, and they opened their Test series with a draw. The All Blacks went on to win the four-Test series 3-0.

Story of the Lions tour

Andrew Baldock

The British and Irish Lions held back-to-back world champions New Zealand to a Test series draw in a hugely-impressive 2017 tour. Here, the Sports Pink runs the rule over the six weeks spent battling the All Blacks by Warren Gatland's squad.

MOMENT OF THE TOUR:

Sean O'Brien finished one of the all-time great Lions tries, albeit en route to the 30-15 first Test defeat at Eden Park. The Lions might have lost that Test series opener, but the Lions put the All Blacks firmly on alert with a score that will resonate across the ages. Liam Williams scythed clear from his own 22, thanks in no small measure from an astute and subtle blocking line from Ben Te'o. Jonathan Davies picked up the baton from Williams, before exchanging passes with Elliot Daly and then offloading the scoring pass to the lurking O'Brien. Some 80 metres from start to finish, to stun the All Blacks in their Auckland stronghold.

STAR MAN:

Jonathan Davies: The Wales centre excelled from start to finish, dismissing all his Lions rivals for the 13 shirt, and then making a fine statement across three top performances against the All Blacks. His two big hits on Jordie Barrett in the 15-15 drawn final Test showed everything about his industry and application, to add to no little talent.

STAT OF THE TOUR:

The Lions only led the All Blacks for a total of three minutes across the entire three-Test series, but still managed to emerge with a one-all draw.



Jamie George

GOOD TOURS:

Jamie George: The England hooker had never started a Test match until the Lions series, but excelled from the off in all three All Blacks encounters. The Saracens star will now be intent on heaping the pressure on England captain Dylan Hartley for the number two starting shirt in boss Eddie Jones' side.

Kyle Sinckler: The Harlequins prop arrived on tour as perhaps the third-choice tighthead - and left as the clear understudy to Ireland's Tadhg Furlong, who

is now himself clearly the best number three in the northern hemisphere. Sinckler so often struggles to contain his latent fury and aggression. But if he can control his anger then he now has the chance to push himself to the front of England's queue as Jones' premier tighthead prop.

TESTING TOURS:

Robbie Henshaw: The Leinster centre was expected to thrive on Lions duty after stunning the All Blacks with a tub-thumping performance when Ireland dispatched New Zealand 40-29 in Chi-

cago last November. But he was simply unable to push himself into Test contention. And then to add insult to his frustrations, Henshaw suffered a torn pectoral muscle in the 31-31 Hurricanes draw which ended his tour prematurely.

George North: The Wales battering-ram wing was the standout star of the Lions' 2013 series win in Australia. But four years on, the Northampton paceman struggled for any kind of form, despite being handed plenty of opportunities before he suffered a hamstring injury.

PINK

5 things you can't miss in the racing week

SUPER STARS

The Weatherbys Super Sprint quite often produces a racing fairytale and it will be fascinating to see who comes out on top at Newbury on Saturday. Mrs Danvers attracted not one sales bid at a reserve of £1,000 as an unraced juvenile but showed price is no bar to success when blazing home to land upwards of £120,000 in prize money last year. Let's hope for another heartwarming tale this time around.

HACKWOOD HEAT

Magical Memory is set to be the star turn in the bet365 Hackwood Stakes at Newbury as he looks to get his career back on an upward trajectory. Connections skipped the July Cup in favour of a planned run in this Group Three heat and it will be interesting to see who

lines up in opposition to Charlie Hills' sprinter.

SUMMER LOVING

Market Rasen hosts its biggest day of the year with the Summer Plate and Summer Hurdle sharing top billing. Both events are backed by Betfred with the £50,000 Plate encompassing an extended two miles and five furlongs over fences, while the hurdle is over an extended two miles for a total prize fund of £35,000. Dan and Harry Skelton teamed up to win both events with Long House Hall and Red Tornado last term, so keep an eye out for their contenders this time around.

MELD TOGETHER

The Group Three Icon Meld Stakes has proved a happy hunting ground for Dermot Weld and Pat Smullen

in the past and they have three possibles, headed by former Group One performer The Grey Gatsby, in the mix this time around. With nine wins for Weld and eight for Smullen, the duo clearly know what it takes to win the nine-furlong prize.

PAPIN PRIZE

Clive Cox won the Prix Robert Papin with Tis Marvellous last year and he has already staked out the Group Two prize for his Royal Ascot victor Heartache. The five-and-a-half-furlong race also went to Cox's top-class juvenile Reckless Abandon back in 2012, with subsequent Classic winners such as Natagora (2007) and Special Duty (2009) other notable recent victors.

Heartache has some big shoes to fill if she heads for Sunday's event at Maisons-Laffitte.

Who could coach the Lions in 2021?

Warren Gatland has already ensured his place in British and Irish Lions history by overseeing a series win in Australia in 2013 and now this year's drawn Test campaign in New Zealand.

Here, the Sports Pink examines the early candidates to coach the Lions in South Africa in 2021.

WARREN GATLAND

WALES AND BRITISH AND IRISH LIONS

Wales head coach Gatland has refused to rule out a third successive tour as Lions boss in 2021. The 53-year-old is on the All Blacks' radar to replace current New Zealand boss Steve Hansen when he retires in 2019. Gatland's Wales contract expires after the 2019 World Cup, and he could now easily be drafted into the All Blacks set-up in due course. But were he still available for Lions duty in four years, he would clearly boast the experience and acumen to man the helm once more.

EDDIE JONES

ENGLAND

England boss Jones has long since joked he will end up on the beach watching cricket in retirement after the 2019 World Cup. And yet in May Jones admitted he would be keen on the Lions role if he were in the right place at the right time when 2021 comes around.

DAI YOUNG

WASPS

Former Wales and Lions prop Young has excelled with Wasps in an upwardly-mobile coaching career that appears destined to take in a Test match stint sooner rather than later. Young ought to



British and Irish Lions head coach Warren Gatland.

be on the radar as a potential replacement for Gatland as Wales boss. The 49-year-old former Cardiff coach appears very settled in the Premiership, and Wasps are certainly continuing to improve under his tutelage. Young understands the Lions' ethos and

demands, and has also created a heavily attack-laden Wasps team that would appeal to traditionalists.

MARK MCCALL

SARACENS

Former Ulster coach McCall's stunning success with Saracens must not be overlooked in any conversation about Test match-calibre coaches. Whether McCall wants a move into the Test arena remains to be seen. But the 49-year-old has built a stunning club dynasty at Saracens, where a full generation of England stars have blossomed in the same team. The spine of the 2017 Lions had a distinctly Saracens feel to it, and that could well be repeated in four years' time.

GREGOR TOWNSEND

SCOTLAND

The former Lions fly-half has graduated from his coaching stint at Glasgow to lead Scotland. His foray into the Test arena represents a huge hike in challenge. But were Townsend to succeed in the coming years, he would certainly move himself into contention to coach the Lions. The 44-year-old built a Glasgow team in his playing image: fast, fleet-footed and boasting no little brain power on the ball. To thrive in the Test arena he must surely add a grittier edge to the Scotland ranks, however.

JOE SCHMIDT

IRELAND

Ireland's Kiwi boss excelled with Clermont and Leinster, and has transferred his cerebral and detailed coaching style into the Test arena. Ireland's maiden win over New Zealand in Chicago in November; the 40-29 victory at Soldier Field, proved his credentials once again. Schmidt's Ireland contract expires after the 2019 World Cup, at which point he may well look to return to his native New Zealand.

The Lions tour ratings

Continued from facing page

CONOR MURRAY: Relished his scrum-half battle with New Zealand's Aaron Smith, and arguably shaded it across the Test series. Arguably now the world's premier number nine. 8

RHYS WEBB: Quick and with an eye for a gap, he understudied Murray strongly and was an excellent squad player. 7

GREIG LAIDLAW: Never really got going, and while an important midweek performer, he did not stand out. 5

MAKO VUNIPOLA: The England prop delivered some dominant displays in the tight and loose exchanges. All-action and aggression, he stepped up to the plate. 8

JACK MCGRATH: Ireland's young loosehead prop did not put a foot wrong, and looks to have a glittering Test future ahead of him. 7

JOE MARLER: A mainstay of the midweek team, Marler consistently put in a shift as the Lions often had to dig deep. 7

TADHG FURLONG: A scrummaging rock for the Lions, he performed with a maturity beyond his years. Already approaching world-class status. 8

KYLE SINCKLER: The young England forward was over-exuberant at times, yet he also offered a great deal around the field. A rich learning experience. 7

DAN COLE: Like Marler, did not show any outward sign of disappointment at missing out on the Tests, doing his job diligently and professionally. 7

JAMIE GEORGE: Moved from England's reserve hooker to Lions Test team starter. George's career has leapt forward with his performances in New Zealand. 8

KEN OWENS: The Wales hooker found consistent levels throughout the tour when was called upon. Commanded respect. 7

RORY BEST: The most-used player as midweek captain, the Ireland skipper was a motivational presence on and off the pitch. 7

MARO ITOJE: England's 22-year-old lock went up another gear with the Lions. Relished the big occasions and taking on New Zealand's revered forwards. 9

ALUN WYN JONES: Has now played in nine successive Lions Tests, recovering from a shaky performance in the series opener to rediscover top form. 7

COURTNEY LAWES: Bristled with pace, power and aggression, and richly deserved a place in the Test match-day 23 on two occasions. 7

IAIN HENDERSON: Arguably the player most unlucky not to feature in a Test. Terrific work-rate, superb ball-carrier and quality set-piece exponent. 8

GEORGE KRUIS: Started the first Test, but had a poor game and then drifted out of the match-day 23 behind Itoje, Jones and Lawes. 5

SAM WARBURTON: The Welshman's second tour as Lions skipper saw him lead from the front in impressive fashion. Combined quality leadership on and off the pitch with performances to match on it. 8

PETER O'MAHONY: Captained the Lions in the first Test, but then made way for Warburton's return in Wellington. Strong, solid tourist. 7

SEAN O'BRIEN: A dynamic operator was arguably the glue of the Lions Test pack. Uncompromising and physical, he also scored an unforgettable first Test try. 8

CJ STANDER: Had his moments, and was on the bench in Tests two and three. Solid, rather than spectacular. 7

ROSS MORIARTY: His tour ended early through injury, denying him the chance to stake a claim for Test recognition. 5

JAMES HASKELL: Played his part largely on the midweek stage. A character whose infectious enthusiasm was important. 6

JUSTIN TIPURIC: Another Test squad hard luck story. Hardly missed a tackle all tour, delivering admirable consistency. 7

TAULUPE FALETAU: Showcased his ability as a world-class number eight. Just got on with his job, and he did it brilliantly. 8

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PINK

Totton's Esther enjoys her 'unreal' Wimbledon week

Picture this. You're a 15-year old kid, a very promising tennis player.

Four weeks ago, you were given a wildcard into Junior Wimbledon, writes **SPENCER VIGNES**.

That means mixing with the professionals, the big stars, right down to sharing the same changing rooms as them.

A very, very different environment from the usual kind of tournament that you get to play in, the kind where the people in the crowd can be counted on one hand let alone two.

Introducing Esther Adeshina from Totton.

For the past couple of years, Adeshina's name has been mentioned in British tennis circles as one to watch, yet even so nobody – least of all her – expected to be playing at the All England Club this week.

Junior Wimbledon is open to boys and girls aged 18 and under who compete in singles and doubles on the same grass courts as the professionals, but even so it's relatively rare for someone aged 15 to be in the draw.

With a world ranking of 250, Adeshina wouldn't have made the cut automatically. However, the Lawn Tennis Association put her name forward as a possible wildcard contender in recognition of her burgeoning talent and the hard work she puts into her training. The All England Club, which decides such things, agreed and gave it to her. And so off to Wimbledon she went.

"Just being here has been an unreal experience," Adeshina said. "You get treated so well, just like the professionals."

"We change in the same changing room as them, have access to the same transport as them, eat in the same restaurant as them. It's just completely different to any other tournament that we get to play in."

Adeshina has been competing in the girls' singles and doubles tournaments this week. She lost narrowly in the first round of the sin-



Totton's Esther Adeshina in action at Wimbledon.

gles, taking the 18-year old Marta Paigina of Italy to three sets before succumbing 2-6 7-5 1-6, yet at this stage it's as much about gaining some invaluable experience as the result. Experience not just of what happens on court, but also off it.

"Being in the changing rooms, being right up close to people you're used to seeing on television, is amazing but takes some getting used to," she says.

"The other day I was in there and Venus (Williams) was there. She's someone I have always looked up to, her and Serena (Williams), but I couldn't go up to her! I just couldn't do it. I could only look at her out of the corner of my eye. That's as

much as I could do. Maybe next time I'll say something!"

Injuries allowing, Adeshina's next time at Wimbledon will almost certainly be in 12 months, barring a catastrophic collapse of form. That's unlikely as the Hampshire teenager is renowned not just for her natural talent but also dedication and hard work on the practice courts, qualities that allow talent to be realised.

"I was at school one day and a couple of coaches from the nearby club (Totally Tennis) came and coached us," she recalls of her introduction to the sport aged six.

"We were living in Basingstoke then and two people out of the

whole year were asked if they wanted to go and play there, and I was one of them. They thought I had good athleticism. So it was luck really getting into it.

"That athleticism has got me to quite a high level. I'm able to chase balls down and stay in rallies. I'm also mentally tough. I stay quite calm on court."

"I want to be back here next year, definitely."

"I'm just going to keep doing what I'm doing, playing some higher grade ITF's (International Tennis Federation tournaments) to get my ranking up, putting in the work, and hopefully it will come together."

Record breaker

New England Test captain Joe Root made a superb 190 to mark his first innings as skipper against South Africa at Lord's in the first Test of the summer.

By doing so Root wrote his name into the history books by amassing the highest score by an Englishman on Test captaincy debut.

Here, the Sports Pink takes a look at the other five top-scoring England Test skippers on debut.

173 Alastair Cook - v Bangladesh, Chittagong 2010

Root's predecessor Cook made a fine 173 in his very first innings as England Test captain in Chittagong, as he, with help from Paul Collingwood (145) and Kevin Pietersen (99) ensured his side amassed 599 for six before he declared. Then, Graeme Swann turned the screw with five wickets in each Bangladesh innings to finish with match figures of 10 for 217, and see England to a 181-run win. Cook went on to captain the side to 24 wins in a record 59 Tests.

128 Andrew Strauss - v Pakistan, Lord's 2006

Despite making just 30 in his first innings as skipper, South Africa-born Strauss struck 128 in the second innings to mark his debut as England skipper in a run-fest at Lord's. The game ended in a draw as Pakistan closed on 214 for four chasing a target of 380 which Strauss played a major role in setting. The left-hander captained England to 24 wins in 50 Tests in charge, including two Ashes series wins.

119 Allan Lamb - v West Indies, Bridgetown 1990

Lamb only captained England for three Tests in 1990 in Graham Gooch's absence through injury, but he suffered defeats in all three of them. Lamb, another South Africa-born batsman, fired 119 in his first innings as skipper as England made 358 in response to West Indies' 446 at Bridgetown. However, he was powerless in the second innings as Curtly Ambrose tore through the tourists' batting line-up taking eight for 45 to bowl England out for 191 and hand the hosts a 164-run win.

109 Archie MacLaren - v Australia, Sydney 1897

MacLaren skippered England on 22 occasions between 1897 and 1909, but he only managed to lead the side to victory four times in that period. One of those wins came in his first Test in charge, in the first Ashes Test of the 1897-98 series in Australia at the Sydney Cricket Ground. The opener made a fine 109, before Kumar Ranjitsinhji added 175 as England posted 551 in their first innings. His side then forced the Aussies to follow-on, before MacLaren scored 50 not out as England chased down 96 to secure a nine-wicket win.

100 Kevin Pietersen - v South Africa, Oval 2008

Taking over the captaincy from the outgoing Michael Vaughan, Pietersen put in a man-of-the-match performance on his debut as Test skipper as he scored 100 from 137 balls, to set up a fine six-wicket win. His side lost the series 2-1, having already lost the second and third Tests, but Pietersen finished as the series' top runs-scorer with 421 runs in four Tests. However, it was to be his only win as Test captain, as he managed just two more games in charge before Strauss was handed the job on a permanent basis in 2009.

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